



DUNCAN TRAIL TO CELEBRATE HERO

Report by Jamie Brassington

FOOTBALL fans can now go on a Dudley town trail devoted to England and Manchester United legend Duncan Edwards.

A leaflet has been relaunched by Dudley Council highlighting landmarks in the town linked to the Dudley-born footballer, still rated by many as one England's best ever players.

The leaflet will allow people to journey on a self-guided tour of landmarks. Highlights include the memorial plaque at his former home on the Priory Estate, the stained glass windows at St Francis Church which were dedicated to the player, a life-sized statue in the town centre, together with his final resting place.

Part of the famous 'Busby Babes' United, Edwards died on February 21, 1958, from injuries sustained in the Munich air disaster, when the aircraft bringing the team back from a match against Red Star Belgrade crashed at the German airport.

A total of 23 died including eight players alongside club officials, journalists, supporters and aircrew. Events will take place this year to mark the 60th anniversary.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler said: "Duncan Edwards was an icon of a generation, who came from humble beginnings in Dudley to become one of the footballing greats. It was a great tragedy that he died at a young age, when he had such a glowing future before him. With February 6 being the 60th anniversary of the Munich air disaster, we thought it would be an opportune time to update and relaunch the leaflet."

"We are proud he was born and bred in Dudley borough and still maintain close ties with Manchester United. They have kindly lent us a number of his shirts for display at the new museum at the Archives, which is one of the stops on this tour. If you visit the archives before 30 March you will also be able to view the temporary exhibition dedicated to Dudley's sporting hero."

Copies of the leaflet are available at the museum, Dudley libraries, tourist attractions and online at discover.dudley.gov.uk website.



Duncan Edwards

VOLUNTEERS HELP MAINTAIN ANCIENT WOODLAND



Green team - Members of the Friends of Alder Coppice prepare to clear the woodland in Sedgley for the new pathways so visitors don't get lost

THE first steps have been taken to improve overgrown ancient woodland in Sedgley.

Three pathways have been created in the 25 acres in Dudley by volunteer group Friends of Alder Coppice after they were awarded a £2,000 grant from the People's Postcode Lottery.

They used the money to buy tools which were used while creating the paths and will be used to maintain the woodlands in years to come.

It took over 12 months to decide and make the routes in the woodland which were previously overgrown and muddy. One resident even got lost in them while trying to take a short cut.

The shortest of the three routes is 750 metres, while the medium is around 1,000m and the longest is 1.5km.

Woodchips were put down on the paths to prevent them from becoming too muddy and markers were put in place to guide walkers.

The Friends of Alder Coppice, which has been going for three years, is made up of 12 active members. The group have previously won two Green Spaces Volunteer Awards from Dudley Council for their work in 2014 and 2016.

Dudley Council owns the land and has given the group permission to improve it.

The group meets on the first Saturday of each month at 10am at the Swallowfields Road entrance.

COURT

Third man faces murder charge

A THIRD man has been charged with murdering a father at a flat above a convenience store in Dudley.

Jaskaran Kang, aged 24, from Handsworth, was stabbed to death at the property in Stourbridge Road on January 6.

Dontay Ellis, 18, of Central Drive, Lower Gornal, appeared at Dudley Magistrates Court. Reggie Salmon, 20, of Stourbridge Road, Dudley, together with a 17-year-old boy from Newcastle-Under-Lyme, who cannot be named for legal reasons, have already been charged over Mr Kang's death. All three were remanded in custody.

DEVELOPMENT

Store and flats plan for 'eyesore' site

PLANS have been submitted to build a supermarket and eight flats in a conservation area in Brierley Hill.

The three-storey development and parking has been earmarked for land on Moor Street and Albion Street, under a planning application from Rizwan Hyder submitted to Dudley Council. The applicant said the development would bring jobs and improve an eyesore site.

ACCIDENT

Lorry ploughs into the side of a house

A LORRY driver was in a serious condition after smashing into the side of a house in Halesowen on Monday. Crews were called to the junction of Carters Lane and Royal Oak Road shortly after 9.45am where a lorry was found to have crashed into the side of a home, knocking down a brick garden wall. No-one in the property was injured. Paramedics found the driver in cardiac arrest.

INSIDE

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Hawthorns to host service for Cyrille

FUNERAL details and a celebratory service have been announced for Black Country football legend Cyrille Regis.

The star's private family funeral will be held on Tuesday, January 30.

West Bromwich Albion have confirmed The Hawthorns will stage a service to honour Cyrille's life immediately after the funeral. The club said this event will be 'a celebration of his life and career'. It will allow Cyrille's fans to join his family at the stadium.

The service for the Albion, Wolves, Coventry and Villa star will be held in the East Stand. It will be conducted from 11am by Pastor David Carr from

the church Cyrille attended, the Renewal Christian Centre in Solihull.

There will be seats for supporters and the public who want to pay their respects to one of the Baggies' all-time greats. The club will announce details of how fans can attend, see their website for details. Otherwise, supporters will have a chance to say their farewells earlier in the day, as Cyrille's funeral cortege will leave The Hawthorns at 8.45am. The club are making plans to accommodate fans who want to salute Cyrille, who died last week aged 59, before the cortege leaves for the private service.

Albion have also confirmed the impromptu

'shrine' at the Astle Gates will remain in place until after the next Premier League home game, against Southampton, for which the club is planning a major tribute to its former England striker.

In a further mark of respect, the stadium flags at The Hawthorns will remain at half-mast until after his funeral. A club statement said: "Julia and Cyrille's children Robert and Michelle have once again asked us to convey the family's huge appreciation for the messages of love and support which continue to flood in from Albion fans and the wider football community."

Colleagues and friends who want to attend the service should email rob.doyle@stellargroup.co.uk

Domestic abuse crime reports up by a fifth

THE number of domestic abuse crimes in the West Midlands rose by almost a fifth in one year, according to a council report.

There were 1,236 domestic abuse crimes between April 1 and September 30 last year – up from 1,061 in the same period in 2016.

A Dudley Council report said the 16 per cent increase in recorded domestic abuse crimes should not 'be viewed negatively' as it means more people are reporting incidents.

However, a Black Country campaigner has disagreed, and said education is key to tackling domestic abuse.

The report for the council's scrutiny committee said: "From April 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017 1,236 domestic abuse crimes have been recorded by West Midlands Police. This compares to 1,061 for the same period in 2016, therefore an increase of 175 recorded crimes.

Awareness

"An increase in recorded crimes is not viewed negatively as a number of campaigns have taken place to increase to raise awareness in respect of domestic violence and abuse, and to encourage reporting."

Samantha Billingham, who runs the Survivors of Domestic Abuse campaign (SODA) in the Black Country, said: "I'm not really sure why there is an increase – there are lots of different reasons why it could be high.

"I would view that as negative definitely and I think something needs to be done early in life. It is all about education."

Samantha, from Brierley Hill, was last week named winner of the Fresh Start award in the Express & Star's Great Big Thank You Awards.

Scrutiny committee member Councillor Karen Jordan added: "I am pleased that people are coming forward and getting help, but on the other hand I am so disappointed that domestic violence is still going on."

Stylist Lee is a cut above the rest



Celebrity hairdresser Lee Stafford works his magic on student Chloe Millard, 18, from Wordsley

HAIR we go! Celebrity hairdresser Lee Stafford visited a college to pass on his skills to hairdressing students during a special masterclass.

Fifty students took part in the event at Halesowen College where Lee re-styled the hair of Chloe Millard, from Wordsley.

Mr Stafford showed off the twist-ed-tong technique, which he said took long straight hair and gave it a 'Kate Moss/Sienna Miller look'.

The students then had the

chance to see advanced hairdressing skills and ask Mr Stafford a range of questions.

The former Hairdresser of the Year – and Men's Hairdresser of the Year – now has hair academies in nine further education colleges and products which sell in more than 40 countries worldwide.

Sharon Stanton, curriculum team manager for hair and beauty, said: "We were delighted to welcome Lee to Halesowen College.

"During his visit he spoke with

students and passed on his skills and experience.

"It was very good of him to give up his time to do the demonstration pass on all his knowledge and expertise to our students."

Mr Stafford won the Men's British Hairdresser of the Year award in 1998 and opened his second salon in Soho, London, two years later.

He was then voted into This Morning's television show as one of their chosen elite stylists.

Crystal clear images help keep crime off the buses

POLICE have praised new CCTV cameras which help officers tackle anti-social behaviour on buses in the Black Country in real time.

Buses in the West Midlands have more CCTV cameras than any other mode of transport, according to National Express. This led a senior police officer to say he is 'staggered' anyone does anything wrong on a bus because the CCTV pictures are so clear.

Detective Inspector Warren Hines of West Midlands Police CID homicide investigation team praised the quality of the CCTV footage used in the case of a fatal stabbing on the number 11 bus in January last year. Kieran Gillespie, aged 26, from Wellesbourne Road, Handsworth, was jailed for life in July for the murder of Leon Barrett-Hazle.

Det Insp Hines said: "Without doubt, the quality of the CCTV footage from the bus solved this case for us. It left the offender no option but to hand himself in once those pictures were published."

National Express West Midlands has multiple CCTV cameras – up to 12 – on every one of its 1,600 buses.

All new buses since 2012 have been fitted with next-generation digital CCTV units which give crystal-clear pictures. West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership has also installed 4G Vemotion CCTV.

Venues to remain closed until 2020

THE Civic Halls in Wolverhampton will stay closed for two years with the major overhaul of the buildings to cost £23 million more than first thought.

It means events booked in for 2018, including the Grand Slam of Darts and top comedians such as Jason Manford and Sarah Millican will not now be held at the famous venues in Wolverhampton.

But while some shows, across the Civic Hall and Wulfrun Hall, may be cancelled council bosses promised the Grand Slam of Darts will be found another home in the city until at least 2020.

City council bosses said people with tickets would be contacted when the situation becomes clear.

Work to revamp the Civic Halls was originally due to cost £14.4 million.

Greyhounds need to find new homes

THE Greyhound Trust has rehomed eight dogs so far this month. Deb Wor-ton, manager at the Dudley-based charity, said: "It would certainly be wonderful if our remaining hounds could find a loving home before the end of the month." Call 07594 474 272.

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Jam-buster bid at island could have 2020 start

LONG-AWAITED plans to revamp a notoriously congested roundabout in the Black Country have finally taken a step forward.

But it could still be up to two years before any improvements get under way at busy Birchley Island.

Transport bosses are set to approve a funding bid to launch a scheme aimed at cutting congestion at the roundabout in Oldbury, which is beside junction two of the M5.

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) say it could be 2020 before any work starts.

Roads chiefs have called for action at the island for years due to the level of congestion faced by drivers on a daily basis.

The LEP said a project review was currently being carried out and when complete detailed designs for the project would follow. It said a 'start on site date' was 'anticipated before 2020'.

Board members are set to approve £150,000 to allow design work to progress but substantial funding for the project has so far proved to be a stumbling block.

Black Country LEP board member Ninder Johal said it was likely the group would wait for the outcome of a feasibility study and find out how much the scheme would cost before making a decision over whether to back it.

Town centre pub is now up for sale

AN historic Stourbridge pub which was told to tighten security after a customer was attacked has gone up for sale.

The Bell, on the corner of Bell Street and Market Street, is being sold through estate agent Andrew Taplin.

The pub is also a hotel and has shop units that are available to let.

Wollaston and Stourbridge town councillor Steve Clark said: "It is a beautiful old building. I know it has had its problems. Hopefully whoever takes over can refurbish the site and make it a big part of the town."

Dudley Council told bosses that security must be improved, after a man was left nursing serious injuries following an attack in October.

Museum's road

PLANS to build a new 1940s to 60s town at the Black Country Living Museum have moved a step forward after an application was submitted to Dudley Council for a new access road at the Tipton Road site.

Celebrity praises slimming club bosses



Pop star and TV celebrity Peter Andre with Julie Cooper, Tash Allmont, Nikki Brant, Claire Wier, Sue Dutton, Debbie Moule and Jane Smith at the ceremony

GROUPS of Slimming World consultants from Dudley and Kidderminster have been praised by singer Peter Andre for helping change lives.

The teams met up with the Australian-raised TV celebrity at the annual Slimming World Awards.

The Mysterious Girl singer co-hosted the event with the organisation's founder and chairman Margaret Miles-Bramwell OBE. He highlighted the efforts of consultants from Dudley and Kidderminster.

Julie Cooper from the Kidderminster group said: "We couldn't be

prouder of our members. It's so rewarding to see people being able to do things that they didn't think were possible before losing weight, whether that's having more energy, feeling happier, wearing smaller clothes, taking up new hobbies, reducing medication or doing more with their family and friends."

Laurie Griffin, who manages Slimming World groups in Dudley, said: "Cuddling up to Peter was a real treat. I'm heading into 2018 super motivated to support even more people in Dudley."

Aldi poised to replace offices with new store

AN Aldi supermarket is poised to be built on the site of former council offices in Sedgley.

Land is being considered on Bilston Street for a new store after Dudley Council buildings were demolished in November.

Councillors have welcomed the move, saying it will help boost trade and eliminate anti-social-behaviour.

An Aldi spokesperson said: "We are always considering new locations for stores across the UK, including in Sedgley. Once we have confirmed a location we will update the local community."

The proposed new store, which would create jobs in the area, would be the latest to open in Sedgley after Aldi took over the former Co-Op in August.

The proposed site for the new store is on land off Bilston Street. It used to be the housing department's offices. The eight staff were moved and the buildings demolished under council cost-cutting moves.

But the area has become for target of anti-social-behaviour including arson, said Sedgley ward councillor Tina Westwood.

The site has been given an 'option to buy' status, meaning interested parties can submit a bid for the land.

Discussions

Councillor Westwood could not confirm that Aldi was looking at the site because business discussions are ongoing, but she said that a supermarket was looking to set up there.

She added: "No planning application has been submitted but a supermarket is looking at the site. The site has an option to purchase, but it hasn't been sold. I would welcome any developments on the site as a result of anti-social-behaviour. A number of times it has been set on fire."

The proposed development has also been welcomed by fellow Sedgley ward councillor Michael Evans, who said: "I believe a new Aldi could be built on the former housing offices. I would certainly welcome a new store to bring in business."



Dudley College student Gia Lawrence-Harish is a finalist in Top Model 2018, which is being held in London in April, after being chosen from thousands

Model student makes it to final

A TEENAGE photography student has reached he finals of a prestigious modelling competition.

Aspiring model 17-year-old Gia Lawrence-Harish was selected from thousands of other hopeful girls, all eager to make it to the finals of Top Model 2018.

The Dudley College student, who admitted she used to be teased at school, said being one of the few to be chosen had boosted her confidence.

Gia said: "I was really shocked to hear I had got through because I thought my nerves had got the better of me. I thought I would fall over. It's hard walking in heels normally let alone trying to be professional in them and strut my stuff."

The teenager from Wolverhampton has been modelling part time since she was 15. The Top Model 2018 Model Awards and Fashion Show will be held in London on April 6 and 7.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Principal quits ahead of report

THE headteacher of a Dudley secondary school has quit his post in advance of the release of a report by school inspectors.

Rob Hatch stood down as principal of Dudley's Holly Hall Academy last week.

The school says he decided to leave after inspectors from Ofsted had visited shortly before Christmas. His interim replacement has been named as Andy Landers, the school's vice-principal.

Jo Higgins, CEO of the trust, said: "Following the recent Ofsted inspection, Rob Hatch decided to leave the academy. The Dudley Academy Trust Board fully recognises Mr Hatch's contribution to the leadership of the school and wishes him every success for the future."

Grab your flat cap for Peaky nights

THE 1920s gangster world of Peaky Blinders is coming back to the Black Country Living Museum, following sell-out nights celebrating the Birmingham-based drama.

Fans of the hit TV show will be able to grab their flat cap or flapper dress to walk around the series' film set, as well as enjoying an evening of music and entertainment from the roaring 20s.

Revellers will be able to take a stroll around Shelby's yard - where many props used during the filming remain - at the adults-only event which takes place on September 7 and 8.

New boss takes over at NHS trust

A NEW chairman has been appointed at Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust. Harry Turner, one of Dudley and Walsall NHS Trust's current non-executive directors and vice-chair, will step up to the top job from February 1. Ben Reid will be stepping down from the role at the end of this month to be chairman at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust.

Chance to have say on conservation areas

RESIDENTS are invited to have their say on proposals to extend three conservation areas in Dudley borough.

In Sedgley the proposal is to extend the boundary of the conservation area to include parts of High Street, Bilston Street, Brick Street, Dudley Street, The Priory, High Holborn and Tipton Street. In Wollaston, The Wordsley Church conservation area also looks to extend Councillor Ian Kettle said: "We want to hear people's views on our proposals before February 19."

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Jeff Lynne's ELO in extra Brum date

JEFF Lynne's Electric Light Orchestra will play a third date in their home city of Birmingham.

The band, which formed in the West Midlands back in 1971, is best known for a huge array of hit songs including Mr Blue Sky, Living Thing, Evil Woman, Roll Over Beethoven and Don't Bring Me Down.

The group will now play Arena Birmingham on October 13, as well as October 10 and 12, which had been previously announced. From 1972 to 1986, ELO accumulated 20 top 20 hit singles in the UK chart.

For more information visit www.arenabham.co.uk Tickets start at £57.40.

Nova recruitment jobs are saved

A WEST Midland recruitment and training agency has been bought out of administration.

The sale of Nova Recruitment by Steven Stokes and Raj Mittal, partners with business advisory firm FRP Advisory, has secured the jobs of all 12 staff based at its Castle Street, Dudley, and Birmingham premises. It has been bought by Capital Outsourcing Group.

Nova Recruitment had expanded its range of services across a number of sectors as part of its steady growth since formation in 1980, with particular expertise in the industrial, retail and catering sectors.

Myths and legends from old Britain

MYTHS and legends of the British Isles will be the topic of an evening canalside talk in Stourbridge.

The Forgotten Tales combines storytelling, poetry and traditional folk songs and is being held at The Bonded Warehouse on March 3, performed by Parable Arts founder, John Buckridge.

It starts at 7.30pm running through to 9pm at the Canal Street venue. Buy tickets from £7.50 online at theforgottental.com website.

Midlands food awards nominations appeal

THE Midlands Food, Drink and Hospitality Awards is set to be the biggest ever, with Pepsi Max as headline sponsor again. It takes place at Edgbaston cricket stadium on June 25.

The awards will recognise and reward bars, restaurants, cafes and other food firms for first class service. Nominations open until April 23. Visit mfdhwards.co.uk to nominate.

Shamed family doctor is sent to prison

A DISGRACED family doctor who preyed on women patients at his surgery has been jailed for 12 years.

Shamed Dr Jaswant Rathore committed 10 sexual assaults on four women patients and was told by Judge Michael Challinor that his 32-year career had been turned into a 'complete shipwreck'.

The Indian-born GP attacked victims who had gone to his Castle Meadows Surgery in Milking Bank, Dudley,

with everyday complaints as mundane as hayfever. The 60-year-old, from Wall Heath, delivered unnecessary massage treatment to patients to satisfy his own lust, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard during his trial.

Judge Challinor continued: "You used your standing in the community as a cloak behind which to carry out assaults on your patients for your personal gratification. By your actions you violated their faith in you."

Judge Challinor said the sexual assaults which occurred over a two and a half year period had been 'planned and sustained'.

Rathore, from Ploughman's Walk, insisted he had always acted professionally and, in each case, the touching during 'manipulative therapy' had been medically appropriate. He was found guilty of eight offences of sexual assault and two counts of assault by penetration, committed against

four women patients. The jury acquitted him of charges alleging eight further sexual offences against four more women, none of whom can be identified.

Mr Alan Jenkins, defending said: "He will now be erased from the medical register and will never practise again." Rathore was made the subject of a sexual harm prevention order for 15 years and put on the sexual offenders register for life.

Disgraced GP 'could have abused others'

Report by Annabal Bagdi

IT was a 'horrific' breach of trust that saw shamed GP Jaswant Rathore attack four female patients in his surgery.

Police officers fear he may have assaulted even more women during his three decades at a Dudley practice.

The 60-year-old is starting a 12-year sentence after jurors convicted him of 10 sexual assaults.

Senior investigating officer Detective Inspector Michelle Thurgood said: "It was a horrific breach of a position of trust. This was somebody who was a trusted GP, respected in the community. Many of the patients had gone to him for many years, so absolutely trusted him."

"We go to our doctor when we're at our most vulnerable and he has abused that trust by carrying out those offences."

Rathore, of Ploughmans Walk, Wall Heath, denied 18 counts of sexual assault between November 28, 2008, and March 26, 2015.

Prosecutors alleged he attacked eight female patients, who cannot be named for legal reasons, after duping them into thinking he was treating their medical problems.

But he told police touching of the women was 'medically appropriate' and he had acted professionally during appointments with patients at Castle Meadows Surgery.

Following a seven-week trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court (see above), jurors found him guilty of 10 sexual assaults, committed during more than two-and-a-half years.

The jury acquitted him of eight further sexual offences allegedly committed against four other women.

DI Thurgood, of West Midlands Police's public protection unit, said she was concerned more victims could be suffering in silence but confirmed there were no plans to bring further prosecutions against Rathore.

She added: "He has been a GP for a long time, there could be other victims."

"What I would say is, if anybody who is reading the Press and they think that they are a victim, then please come forward."

"If you can find the strength to come forward, do so. You'll be given all the time and support you need to help you."



GP Jaswant Rathore has been jailed



The Castle Meadows surgery at Milking Bank, Dudley

Rathore's offending came to light when one of his victims spoke to police about her ordeal for the first time in May 2015. After gathering statements from victims, as well as securing medical and phone records, Rathore was charged in December in relation to three women.

DI Thurgood confirmed it was the first time Rathore had been prosecuted for sex offences, adding: "[May 2015] was the first report ever in relation to him."

Bravery

"Very quickly after her report, we had two further reports. We investigated the case against the three women. When he was charged, we put out a press release. That led to numerous phone calls and a further five women coming forward."

"The women have all shown extreme bravery in coming forward. The majority of them were extremely traumatised by what had happened to them. They couldn't quite believe what had happened to them."

The sex offender, who was supported throughout his trial by his wife and daughters, refused to answer any questions during police interview and instead offered prepared statements.

DI Thurgood said there was 'no interaction' from Rathore, adding: "In all his interviews, it was just prepared statements, he didn't comment."

"He was just very cold, he had obviously taken advice from his counsel, so didn't say anything."

During the trial, prosecutor Ms Heidi Kubik claimed Rathore assaulted the women to fuel his 'illicit sexual desire' while at the helm of the Milking Bank practice.

He told patients he needed to carry out the treatment to alleviate their pain but instead sexually assaulted them.

The prosecutor said patients trusted the family doctor, who had been at the surgery since 1986, when he advised them his medical examinations were necessary.

Senior Crown prosecutor Ian Pinkney, of West Midlands Crown Prosecution Service's complex casework unit, said: "Dr Jaswant Rathore abused his position of trust to carry out a series of sexual assaults against a number of his female patients."

"He preyed on women who contacted him for medical assistance, but rather than offer them help, he assaulted them for his own sexual gratification."

Council 'not ignoring' green belt concerns

COUNCIL officers have insisted they are listening to residents concerns over a review of green belt land after they were accused of 'ignoring' them.

Dudley Council is set to press ahead with the review, despite calls for it to be halted by those concerned about more development on the borough's rural fringe, particularly near Halesowen.

The green belt review follows a 10-week public consultation held by the council as part of the Black Country Core Strategy to plan up to 2036 and aims to address a 22,000 shortfall of homes across the region.

But councillors branded the public consultation - which focused on the shortfall of brownfield sites needed to accommodate the 78,000 homes required by 2036 - as not 'robust' enough at an overview and scrutiny committee meeting last week.

Urgent

Councillor Simon Phipps, who represents Belle Vue ward, said: "I personally feel the entire consultation of the Black Country Core Strategy has not been robust enough."

"I would also like to recommend that the board recommends cabinet request an urgent report on the issues and options consultation prior to approving any further work on the Black Country Core Strategy."

The consultation yielded 1,600 formal responses and 300 social media comments.

Speaking at the meeting was Gary Mills, a Halesowen resident, said he felt the process was going ahead 'without listening to the public consultation'.

But Alan Lunt, strategic director, said: "I can absolutely assure you that your comments and your observations during the consultation are not being ignored. They will be taken into account along with a great weight and wide range of evidence which we are obliged to collect and collate in order to ensure that we have a sound local plan. If we do not undertake a green belt review then the green belt is at greater risk."

Charter update

DUDLEY Council's plan to create a charter for dignity in care will be showcased at an event next week.

Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living and Disability in Action will update the public about how improvements to treatment will be made in Dudley.

The event will take place at Queens Cross Network, Wellington Road, Dudley, on Thursday, February 1. For more information call (01384) 813460.

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Health boss thanks staff for care and dedication

DIRECTORS were brought into a hospital's accident and emergency department to ensure it was being run safely amid unprecedented demand.

Nursing and medical directors oversaw the A&E at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley as staff battled to cope with the 'huge demand'.

Staff have been praised for their efforts during the difficult period as the chief executive of the trust which runs the hospital, Diane Wake, admitted recent weeks had been challenging.

The hospital has struggled to cope with the numbers coming into A&E, like many other NHS hospitals during the winter crisis.

The national NHS target is that 95 per cent of patients should be seen within four hours. But only 83.9 per cent were seen within four hours in November, down from 90 per cent the previous month.

Ms Wake, boss of Dudley Group NHS Trust, said: "We have experienced huge demand for our emergency services, in particular the acutely unwell arriving by ambulance.

"The type of activity has caused challenges for us with patient flow and we continue to work with colleagues across the health and social care economy to provide the best care for our patients.

"I have been so impressed by the outstanding care, dedication and resilience I have seen and I hope it goes without saying how proud and grateful I am of each and every member of staff. I know some staff even gave up spare time during this busy period. Both the nursing and medical director have been onsite to oversee patient safety and quality standards are maintained."

Phoenix group to combat loneliness

A SOCIAL club for the widowed and divorced is on the look out for new members.

Phoenix Amblecote meets every Wednesday evening at the Amblecote Royal British Legion club in School Drive, Stourbridge.

Secretary Carol Key said it was a good way for single adults who had either separated from, or lost their partners, to meet new people and combat loneliness.

The group is a branch of the national organisation National Council for the Divorced, Separated & Widowed. Up to 100 people attend each session. Members pay £3 a week to take part, plus a £5 annual subscription. Email carol.key2@hotmail.com for details.

Sex game killer showed no remorse



Murderer Ashley Foster

KILLER Ashley Foster faces at least 26 years behind bars for murdering teenager Megan Bills in an act of 'evil cruelty beyond belief'.

The twisted 24-year-old was obsessed with deviant sex and confessed in a letter to his mother that the 17-year-old had been strangled during violent love-making. It came just hours after they met for the first time following his release from jail three days earlier after trying to stab one of his sisters.

He has been jailed for life for murdering Megan with a minimum term of 26 years. Foster, whose two pleas to let him strangle a previous girlfriend during sex had

been rejected, wrote: "We ended up having sex. She tells me she likes to be strangled, so I obliged. I strangled her and she loved it so much . . . but then as I released her, her eyes closed."

But he repeatedly refused to say exactly how Megan met her death in his room at the New Horizons hostel for ex-offenders in Highgate Road, Brierley Hill, on April 16 last year – and declined to give evidence at his Wolverhampton Crown Court trial. He admitted preventing her burial but denied manslaughter and murder.

He hid the body in a wardrobe that was wrapped in cling-film to speed up decomposition of the corpse. When the body was

found almost three weeks later it was impossible to pinpoint the cause of death.

Detective Inspector Caroline Corfield said: "He never showed any remorse. His only concern was himself. He had an obsession with deviant sex and he disposed of Megan's young life to satisfy his own twisted desires."

Megan's adoptive parents Dawn and Martin Bills said: "This vile and tragic event has robbed us of so much. To have lost Megan and had her body concealed until it had rotted beyond recognition is painful beyond words, and demonstrates an evil cruelty beyond any decent comprehension."

Megan's 'dangerous life' ended in tragedy

MURDER victim Megan Bills had a difficult start in life and was put into foster care at the age of four but her fortunes changed two years later when she was placed with a loving Stourbridge family.

Dawn and Martin Bills, who already had a son – James, now aged 26 – formally adopted the seven year old the following year and she took their surname, she had previously been Megan Smith. Megan attended two local schools – St James Church of England Primary and then Ridgewood High School – enjoyed swimming, sang in a church choir and played the flute.

Then she started becoming increasingly independent. "It all seemed to happen in the blink of an eye," recalled her mother. At the age of 16 Megan moved in with the family of her then boyfriend Josh Edwards, now 19, who she met in August 2014.

She left school the following year and went to Dudley College where she passed a year-long hairdressing course in 2016 before beginning more advanced training at Halesowen College.

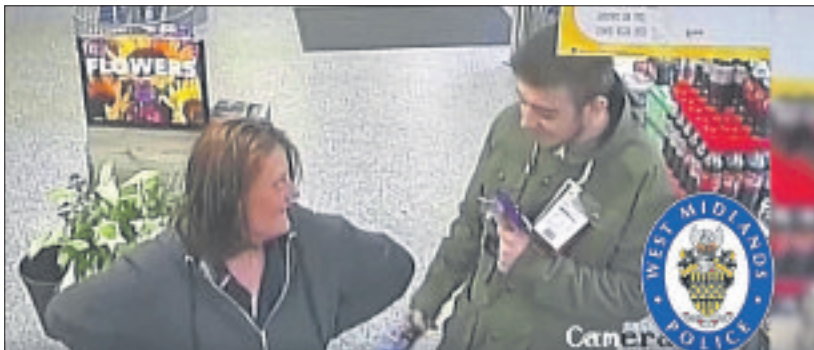
Changed

She moved into a housing project but spent increasing amounts of time at a bedsit in Hall-church Road, Dudley, where her boyfriend now lived., breaking the terms of her tenancy Megan moved in with him full time at the start of last year but he found her a changed person.

Josh explained: "She was hanging around with the wrong people which led to rows between us. She would just leave and come back drunk. She was mixing with a different set of friends who I did not know."

The last of these was so bad that the police were called and the couple made a mutual decision to break up. Josh returned the flat keys to the council and went back to live with his parents on March 29 last year. He last saw her on April 14 – the day after Ashley Foster was freed on licence from Winson Green prison.

What neither he nor her adoptive parents realised, was that she had broken into his former flat and was squatting there. Megan had neither a mobile phone nor computer that worked which made it very difficult for her family to keep in



Ashley Foster chats with 17-year-old Megan Bills shortly after they first met, hours later he was to kill her

touch. They last saw the teenager on April 11. Mrs Bills revealed: "We had made plans for her to move back in with us at the end of the May Bank Holiday but she asked for time and space to sort herself out first." As a result Mrs Bills did not report her as missing until May 5 – the day after the body was found in the wardrobe.

Foster admitted preventing the lawful burial of the teenager and a letter written by him to his mother gave police a vital breakthrough. The note, found in a cupboard, confessed to strangling Megan during violent sex but maintained it was an accident.

Analysis of his two mobile phones revealed that in the days following Megan's death he made numerous searches of the internet for 'snuff' movies – pornographic films involving murder.

Detective Inspector Caroline Corfield, who led police inquiries, said: "What normal human being would start searching this kind of porn after doing what he had done? It clearly turned him on."

Officers also recovered Megan's clothes and one of his shirts with her blood on it which had been dumped in a bin outside the hostel and could have been used to throttle her.

Mrs Bills had no idea that Megan had started to mix with people from the New Horizons hostel for ex-offenders in Highgate Road, Brierley Hill, where

24-year-old Foster was given a room after his release from prison.

He met Megan for the first time just hours before she died on April 16, Easter Sunday. She arrived at the hostel, where she had been several times previously, around midday. She asked Foster for a cigarette and quickly returned to his room to cadge another one. They left the hostel together soon afterwards to buy cannabis and bought cans of drink from a shop. The pair spent a short time at the hostel between two shopping trips before Megan returned with Foster for the final time around 1.50pm.

The hostel's CCTV showed them going into his room and captured Megan again in the doorway at 3.35pm. She was never seen alive again.

On May 3 staff at the hostel noticed a suspicious smell while carrying out the first monthly inspection of Foster's room. He blamed this on the carpet. The wardrobe was shrouded in a quilt. The following day staff made the gruesome discovery. Foster was arrested the same day after being spotted in Walsall town centre.

Foster's sister Carley Forrester said: "He is not the brightest and this led to bad decision making. The worst decision he ever made was to try to fulfil his perverse sexual fantasies with a girl he barely knew. It ended her life and destroyed his."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Memorial garden revamp is closer

A CAMPAIGN to refurbish a memorial garden for babies has moved a step forward after Dudley Council approached two trusts for funding.

Plans have been in the pipeline to improve Gornal Babies Memorial Garden at Gornal Wood Crematorium and Cemetery, after concerns it was becoming untidy. The council has approached two trusts for funds, which could see £25,000 generated, and one trust has already indicated it will help.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for bereavement services, said: "The memorial garden is an important element of Gornal Wood cemetery, giving bereaved parents a dedicated space to contemplate and lay tributes to their lost children. By sensitively re-landscaping the space, with allocated and purpose-built compartments for precious objects, we hope to make a calming place to sit and reflect."

Corporate teams can enter road run

BUSINESS chiefs have backed a fun run which is again being held in Halesowen later this year.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce supports The Black Country Road Run, which will be taking place on July 1.

The event is co-ordinated by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club and this year the event will also include a corporate challenge.

Businesses can participate in either a 10km run or fun run with teams of five, which can be a team building exercise or promoting fitness in the workplace.

For more information go online to www.theblackcountryrun.com/corporate-challenge website.

Charity plea for more volunteers

A CHARITY that supports vulnerable adults in the Black Country is in need of more volunteers.

Dudley Advocacy needs support to help people with learning disabilities.

For more information contact Colette Barker on (01384) 456877 or info@dudleyadvocacy.org

New keep-fit class for the older generation

A NEW keep-fit class for the older generation is starting.

The gentle class, aimed at those new to exercise, is being held at the Oakfield Community Centre in Brierley Hill every Monday. The classes run from 11.15am to 12.15pm.

For more details call 07540 805497.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Carrier bag charge is a pain on the pocket

IF THE comments by the chattering classes over the past few days are to be believed, one might be forgiven for thinking that the 5p charge on carrier bags has been an unparalleled success, rivalled only by sliced bread.

Maybe it's just me, but when I go to the supermarket checkout, I don't feel a sense of awe at the genius of those behind the scheme. I just feel discomfort as I stuff a packet of frozen peas in my trouser pocket because yet again I've left my bags in the car.

What is interesting is that I've just read that these "bags for life", which the do-gooders keep banging on about, are not quite as green as they would have us believe.

Recent research says they actually cause 175 times more damage to the environment than the conventional "throw away" ones. And let's be honest, did anybody actually thrown them away after using them just once? I've still got old bags dating back from the 1980s, which are used to store old newspapers and magazines.

Indeed, another statistic is that plastic shopping bags account for just 0.2 per cent of household waste, but I suppose we can't let the fact get in the way of a bit of virtue signalling.

But here's another thought, if plastic is so bad, instead of charging us 5p or 10p for our bags, why don't they just give us free paper bags like they used to? These could go in the recycling with our old newspapers, and everyone's a winner.

Anyhow, that argument seems to have been lost, and plastic-free aisles are about to become the next big thing. In five years time those shrink-wrapped apples and grapes will probably become as obsolete as ration books.

Sounds fair enough on paper, but I do wonder if anybody actually took the trouble to ask the supermarkets why they sell fruit and veg in plastic packaging to begin with.

Because an industry insider tells me it is not because supermarkets get some perverse pleasure out of wasting money or trying to destroy the planet. It is because the packaging has been carefully designed to make the produce last longer, in order to reduce waste.

So we might save on a bit of plastic here and there, but end up throwing away tons of perfectly good fruit and veg. And of course, when people do select the fruit and veg from the plastic-free aisle, they will put it into plastic bags.

Still, got to be seen to do something, haven't we?

Farewell to a legendary broadcaster, Ed Doolan



The passing of Ed Doolan, a broadcaster who never shied from telling it how it is



Donald Trump – not the first US President to have his intellect brought into question



Penelope Keith as Margo in The Good Life, a role which she will never shake off

Wheel be careful, driving in the city

ACCORDING to new data, it is harder to pass your driving test in Wolverhampton than in most other parts of the country. Which poses an obvious question: how many drivers in Wolverhampton actually bother to take the test?

WHEREVER you drive in Britain you will witness occasional incidents of carelessness and inattention. But Wolverhampton is the only place where I've seen a driver with a plate on his lap eating a meat pie with a knife and fork, at the traffic lights. It takes a brave cop to come between a Black Country man and his pasty.

SO farewell, Ed Doolan, the veteran BBC broadcaster who died last week. Always good listening, always wise company, Doolan believed there was less evil in the world than some people seemed to think, and that when life seems to conspire against us, it's probably just a cock-up. As he told me nearly 20 years ago: "Never put down to malice anything you can put down to stupidity. It's usually something that's gone wrong or some jobsworth throwing his weight around on a bad morning."

DOOLAN is generally described as a champion of the underdog. But some underdogs strained his patience. I remember a caller to his Radio WM show complaining that there was a gap in her fence and her kids were getting out and playing by the road. "You get a hammer, some nails and some wood," said Doolan, "and you fix the hole." He repeated this patiently, word for word, several times until the protesting caller got the message and hung up. "Ah, the dependency culture," sighed Doolan. He had a soft heart but was never a soft touch.

A READER, who apparently wishes half the

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



population dead, writes: "When the current batch of Little Englanders are pushing out the daisies, the young people of today will be in charge and will reapply to join the EU." Splendid. I have taken the liberty of drafting the question for the 2040 EU Referendum voting form: "Hey, kids, would you like Britain to become one of the chief financiers and the military wing of the Great European Empire, now embracing Turkey and Albania and pushing its borders up against Russia and Syria? Or would you prefer Britain to remain the independent, peaceful and prosperous global trading nation it is now in 2040, controlling its own frontiers, respected throughout the world and acting as friend and honest broker to the USA, China, Russia and Europe?"

DONALD Trump is not the first US president to be mocked for his intellect, or lack of it. There was an unkind, and untrue, story of President George W Bush being horrified at a news report that three Brazilian soldiers had been killed in Iraq. "Remind me again," the president asked his aides. "How many is a brazilian?"

I WAS reminded of that tale by a letter in the Daily Telegraph this week suggesting a new name for any unimaginably large sum of money. Carillions.

NO matter how they package and rebrand her, Penelope Keith, currently presenting Village of the Year (C4), is forever Margo, the snif-

fy, houseproud snob from The Good Life. And whichever village finally emerges as the winner in this oddly-conceived daytime show, I bet you won't be allowed to visit it until Margo has made you take off your muddy boots.

INCIDENTALLY, I see one of the shortlisted villages is my regular holiday haunt of Beer in Devon. Whatever Margo says, just stay away. You'd hate it. Really.

ONE of the claims made by a retired officer during the debate on army recruiting is that war is good for recruitment. I know of no official figures to support this but I do recall the steady stream of would-be heroes who turned up at my local TA drill hall in 1982 eager to join the colours and do their bit in the Falklands. Some were of the generation that just missed National Service when it was wound up in the 1960s. "I always felt I was cheated of something," one of them told me.

CHEATED? But of what? The great thing about National Service was the unknown. I knew two blokes who were called up in the 1950s. One spent his two years "counting blankets at Catterick," as he put it. The other spent it on Sunderland flying boats in the Far East. When people talk about bringing back National Service, they should tell us what sort of National Service they mean. Put me down for the Sunderlands.

PETER Rhodes will be speaking at Wolverhampton Literature Festival on Sunday, January 28. See: <http://www.wolverhamptonliteraturefestival.co.uk/peter-rhodes/4594118684>

TALKING POINT



Struggling to keep those new year goals

'Less is more' was the theme when it came to making my 2018 New Year resolutions. As the clock chimed 12 I determined I would eat and spend less and not swear so much.

Come December 31 2018 there will be a slimline, more ladylike me with more available funds in my purse and a not-so stressed credit card.

The only 'more' I was allowing myself was with reading, in the hope this lead to greater relaxation.

But a little early research proved a tad disheartening. Statistics show that only eight per cent of people actually stick to their resolutions, with losing weight and spending less the most common goals.

However, in retrospect, the first month of the year is not a good time to make such resolutions.

For example, the 25 per cent of us who have resolved to spend less forgot one great obstacle – the January sales. The four-letter word is emblazoned over every shop and supermarket window tormenting us, pulling at our purse strings.

Not only did I trawl the rails and racks of every high street fashion shop, I bought a three-piece suite. It was half price, though, and I don't have to start paying for a year so does that actually count as a fail? Then there is the challenge for the 32 per cent of us determined to eat less. Firstly, the cupboards are still full of all the extra food shipped in for Christmas, exasperated by the selection of chocolates and sweets Santa popped in your stocking.

All this food can't just be allowed to get to waste. And, as we are in the throes of winter, our bodies demand we eat more to protect against the weather, it's like hibernation. I am genetically programmed to fail on this resolution.

No excuses for not curbing my foul mouth though. Despite the provocation of some frankly appalling drivers who would thoroughly deserve the unladylike profanities, this is achievable. However, at 20p a time per curse it is further compounding my failure to spend less.

Success, so far, however on the reading, thanks to a small library of Christmas gift books and an unwillingness to break away from the fire and venture out on a cold, dark evening.

This would achieve the aim of being more relaxed if I wasn't so worried about how much I was spending on a new sofa, all the calories I had consumed to make a dent in the food mountain and how much the journey on the M6 had benefited the swear jar. But I remain convinced that less is more – next year I will make fewer resolutions.

DIANE DAVIES

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Revive main line rail rather than trams

YOU reported that our Dudley council- lers want to bring some visitors to the Commonwealth Games by an 11km tram line on our mainline railway to Sandwell's main line, where they would have to change.

There is no need, if the councillors and MPs could rise from their stupor and make use of the full 120 km to bring people from all over the UK by regional and intercity trains straight into Brum via Stourbridge and Bescot.

They still think they can only have

slow trams when they actually have a fast, main line railway through the heart of the Black Country and its capital, Dudley, at Castle Gate. All that is missing are the stations and fast trains!

The leisure/tourist attractions, hotels, eating places and food stores are at the bottom of Castle Hill in Low Town where the Dudley main line railway station is. Rebuild it and use it for trains without bothering with shutting passengers on the tram to

Sandwell's main line. You have your own. Use it fully and sensibly. Connect to High Town with an electric bus service at a fraction of the price of the grossly extravagant and unnecessarily wasteful Metro tram.

At High Town put high quality, modest sized, energy efficient, A-rated homes on the sites of those empty office blocks that are such an eyesore, Caven- dish House and in Flood Street.

TIM WELLER
Halesowen

Can't afford to feed, so don't breed

SCHOOLS don't just teach anymore.

The ever-changing roles of the schools and teachers now includes taking on parental roles.

In a First World country in the 21st century, school doesn't just educate; in fact, schools are feeding their pupils breakfast, washing and laundering children's uni- forms, and even charging up phones for parents who run out of electricity tokens.

I can't imagine what would happen to some of these children if it wasn't for these extra-curricular services!

We're not a developing nation, no child should be turning up to school with an empty stomach or in dirty clothes.

The time has come to remind parents of the most basic of needs; and it's harsh but true that if they can't af- ford to feed, they shouldn't breed!

VICKY H BARTLETT
Dudley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Call to halt fuss over Bell End name

I WOULD like to point out that the majority of the resi- dents of Bell End, some of them elderly, do not want the name changed and this has been very upsetting for us all.

It was started last year when some teenagers posted a photograph of themselves on social media, sitting on the road sign for Bell End and laughing. This road sign later 'disappeared'.

We are fed up with all this unwanted publicity which has been blighting our lives. We want to be left in peace to enjoy living in Bell End.

PATRICIA WALKER
Rowley Regis

Too much waste in the NHS

I DO not agree that Theresa May is single handedly re- sponsible for the state of the NHS. Surely the head of the NHS has to take some re- sponsibility for the terrible situation it is currently in.

Whilst some of the prob- lem may be attributed to lack of funding, certainly there are other issues to be addressed. The money has to be used in the best pos- sible way and waste cut to a minimum. It's obvious that this is not being done by the people who run the NHS.

Expensive drugs are regu- larly thrown away, ex- pensive equipment is not retrieved by hospitals from patients who no longer re- quire it, and paramedics in ambulances are frequently sent out to deal with regular local drunks.

We need to look at the funding as a whole and how efficiently its being used be- fore we demand the resig- nation of the PM.

CHRIS BAKER
Halesowen

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Crucial questions to consider before buying a conservatory



A new consumer guide has revealed how to select the right company to fit the perfect conservatory for your home.

Britain is a nation of proud homeowners and one of the best ways to enhance the look and feel inside your home is by adding a conservatory. Apart from the extra space, a huge benefit of having a conservatory is the value it adds to your property.

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This is more than kitchens at 4.6% and bathrooms at 2.88% combined.

There are many uses for conservatories, one of which is turning it into a dining area. Imagine enjoying quality time around the dining table with family and friends, creating those unforgettable memories on birthdays, anniversaries and festive celebrations.

Avoid Making Costly Mistakes

Far too many homeowners are making poor choices at the point of purchase, which can have far reaching consequences in the future.

For example...if you're lucky enough to have a south-facing garden with a conservatory you will naturally attract more heat from the sun meaning it can be sweltering hot if it's not correctly ventilated, or when the temperature changes in the winter you could freeze without appropriate heating.

With proper planning you can prevent those two extremes happening, which is commonplace in poorly designed conservatories.

Choosing the right company

The big challenge homeowners face is in choosing the right company. The traditional way is

to simply call in three companies to quote and then make a decision based on price. This method is flawed because most companies will price match. But might not quality match.

A spokesman said: "Doing your due diligence before inviting any company out to quote will safeguard you. This can be done with the aid of two free resources we recommend."

"These two resources will arm you with information you need to avoid unscrupulous operators who provide overpriced inferior products, with poor craftsmanship."

"Having access to these resources will certainly shield you from making any mistakes."

"If you're thinking about buying a conservatory, we would urge you to read the Ultimate Consumer Awareness Guide for Buying a New Conservatory."

Inside the guide you'll discover"

● The seven questions you must ask before inviting a conservatory company to your home.

● How to evade the four biggest conservatory rip-offs used on unsuspecting homeowners.

● Learn about the little known Government legislation that could end up costing thousands in insurance claims, plus present a major problem if you try to sell your home.

● The eight mistakes to avoid when choosing the style of conservatory.

And much, much, more vital information, including the second free resource to help you make a better buying decision.

Call 0800 085 8518 now to receive your free copy of "The Ultimate Consumer Awareness Guide for Homeowners".



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In previous years, it was a given that new windows would always be replaced with like-for-like, which in most cases meant white PVC-U, but in recent years, there has been a colour revolution driven by customers like you. Whilst white PVC-U is still going strong, today there is a myriad of options available, from dark anthracite greys, through to beautiful elegant creams, all the way through to soft greys and greens. Because of

the varied colour palate and range of design options, we're experienced enough to work with you should you live a period country cottage or on a modern housing development.

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A spokesman added: "As well as enhancing the look of a home, doors and windows need to be able to offer protection from both unwanted visitors and the elements, so our high performance windows and doors are energy rated A++ Gold, with state-of-the-art locking systems, because customers like you would not expect anything less."

Mr & Mrs Lane commented: "The fitter was very good, tidy - taking all waste away and leaving no sign he'd been here. And the door is very sturdy, secure and good quality."

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The range of products continue to grow and new for 2018 is the range of Signature 2, double-glazed windows and doors which now incorporate the Tricept improved security features that have achieved the top accreditation PAS 24 and also feature a new range of luxury handles.

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Mr & Mrs Chandler commented: "From start to finish they were excellent and were very pleasant and cheerful. Our windows are beautiful and would tell anyone to use Wombourne Windows."

The spokesman added: "Come and view the full range of products at our newly-refurbished showroom and see for yourself why Wombourne Windows are market leaders for all your window, door, conservatory and orangery requirements."



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They're in the house — they've got a gun!

A POLICEWOMAN feared she would die as a teenager pointed what looked like a handgun at her.

Pc Jemma Follows was responding to a report of a burglary in Stourbridge when she was confronted in the dark by 19-year-old Reece Lones.

The officer yelled at Lones, asking what he was doing but the teenager pulled out a gun. It was only later that it was found to be an imitation.

Pc Follows reacted by pointing her Taser weapon at Lones but then the police constable heard a 'click'.

The 29-year-old admitted she thought she was going to die and her two young children would lose their mother. But instead Lones dodged into another room.

In a dramatic video, released by police from Pc Follows' body-camera, she can be heard appealing for back-up on her radio saying 'Oscar 91 they're in the house and they've got a gun'.

Taxi

She ran outside and jumped into a nearby taxi to hunt Lones down. He had fled out of the back of the house in Park Street, Stourbridge. The taxi took the officer to where the suspects were last seen. She then tasered a 17-year-old who had been acting aggressively. He was alleged to have had a knife and cannabis in his possession.

Lones was arrested two hours later after being spotted by firearms officers on Stourbridge's busy High Street.

Dash-cam footage from their patrol car can be seen in the police video as they screech to a halt in the High Street before jumping out shouting at Lones to get on the ground at gun-point.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard



Reece Lones has been sent to a young offenders institution

Lones had been armed with an imitation handgun designed to look like a 9mm semi-automatic pistol. It was found dumped in the house from which the defendant ran away.

The property is owned by his mother and was not occupied at the time. He had 'issues' with his father and, on November 5, she agreed to let her son live there for a short time. Ten days later she asked him to leave. But Lones, who did not have a key, had nowhere else to stay and got back inside through a damaged skylight on November 18, activating an alarm he did not know had been installed, and police were called at 10pm.

Pc Follows, an officer with eight years experience, recalled: "When I initially saw the gun I was completely shocked as, in my whole career, I have never encountered a firearm on the streets. I believed there was a realistic



Pc Jemma Follows believed she may never see her children again

chance I would be shot. I was scared. I have two very young children and believed for a moment that I might not see them again."

Mr Shiva Misra, defending Lones, who had two previous convictions for criminal damage, conceded: "He was in drink and was foolish in the extreme. Goodness knows why he had the gun but he understands how scared and fearful the officer was."

Lones, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to possession of an imitation firearm with intention to cause fear and was given two years three months detention in a young offenders institution.

The other teenager, who was Tasered, can't be named for legal reasons. He was charged and given a conditional caution.

See the video of the incident at www.expressandstar.com

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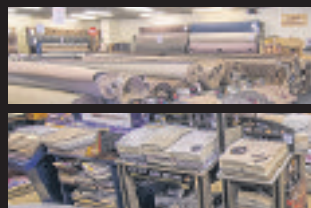
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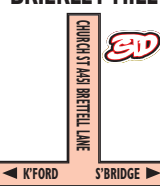
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Fine for cabbie who refused guide dog

A TAXI DRIVER who refused to pick up a blind man and his guide dog, claiming he was allergic to dogs and frightened of them, has been ordered to pay more than £1,000.

Jason Lane and his guide dog Crispin had to order another taxi after Abdul Khalik said he would not take them from Bearwood into Birmingham city centre. They were on their way to celebrate Jason's mother's birthday.

Mr Lane, 48, said: "It was really frustrating. I had my 84-year-old mum waiting for me in Birmingham and the taxi was already late, then he literally just drove off."

Mr Lane said he regularly used the taxi company Premier Cars in Langley and had never had a problem travelling with Crispin before.

Khalik, 42, of Crompton Road, Handsworth, defended himself through an interpreter at Walsall Magistrates Court. He denied refusing to have an assistance dog in his car but claimed he was both allergic and frightened of dogs.

Khalik was found guilty of failure/refusal to carry out a booking made by a disabled person accompanied by an assistance dog. He was given a 12-month conditional discharge and ordered to pay Sandwell Council's £1,030 costs plus a £20 victim surcharge. He surrendered his taxi licence after the matter was reported to the council.

It's a boy! Dendi is zoo's new arrival



Dudley Zoo's baby baboon Dendi is the second for Addis IT'S a boy! The gender of a zoo's newest addition has been revealed.

Keepers at Dudley Zoo threw a 'gender reveal party' for the gelada baboon, which delighted the attraction's other resident baboons.

This saw two boxes packed with coloured plastic children's balls, hay and treats put in the gelada's indoor den. It didn't take long for 13-year-old alpha male Elano and adult female, Tana, to tip out blue balls and reveal the news that new addition Dendi is a boy – his fourth son. The youngster is the second baby for 11-year-old Addis, who is also mum to three-year-old Billie.

The new baby was born on December 21 and has been named after Mount Dendi, the second highest volcano in Ethiopia, which is the home country of the species.

Dendi joins brothers Billie, Gimbi and Ambo – who spent hours afterwards playing with the ball-pit balls – as well as adult females Jimma and Tana in their half-acre natural hillside enclosure on the lower zoo site.

Special Ned's ale is Wonder-ful Stuff

THE Wonder Stuff and Ned's Atomic Dustbin have teamed up with a brewery to launch a limited edition ale.

Ned's Wonder has been created with Birmingham's Froth Blowers Brewing Company for this year's Love From Stourbridge tour.

A competition is being held to win a place at a special acoustic concert and tasting session with Wonder Stuff frontman Miles Hunt and Ned's Atomic Dustbin singer Jonn Penney in Stourbridge on January 31.

The Love From Stourbridge tour featuring The Wonder Stuff and Ned's Atomic Dustbin takes place in April. The bands will also be joined by DJ Graham Crabb from Pop Will Eat Itself, another Stourbridge band.

There are two dates at Birmingham's O2 Academy on April 14 and 15, and the first has already sold out.

● Penney for his thoughts – page 27

Councils find trafficked child victims of modern day slavery

COUNCILS in the Black Country and Staffordshire picked up 13 suspected child victims of human trafficking and modern day slavery in three months.

Figures from the National Crime Agency show how many referrals were made to the UK Human Traf-

ficking Centre (UKHTC) from July to September last year. There were 14 across our region.

Five came from Dudley Council, four from Wolverhampton, three from Sandwell Council and one each from both Walsall and Stafford Borough Council. All were children apart from one adult referred from Dudley. West Midlands Police referred 27, including three children, over the same period.

Referrals are made to the UKHTC to determine if they are a victim of human trafficking or modern slavery. During the investigation the person is given a safe house and 45 days 'recovery period'.

If deemed a victim they can remain in the UK if they co-operate with police under a year-long stay, or if they successfully apply through the Home Office.

Family inspires comic's new show

COMEDIAN David Baddiel will bring his new one-man show to Dudley Town Hall on April 19.

The Olivier Award nominated My Family: Not the Sit-com arrives in Dudley following its sold out run at London's Menier Chocolate Factory and in the West End.

It is described as a show about memory, ageing, infidelity, dysfunctional relatives, social media, golf and gay cats. Tickets cost £25.50 and can be bought by calling the box office on (01384) 812812 or at the boroughhalls.co.uk website.

Writer and comic Baddiel first found fame as part of The Mary Whitehouse Experience with Rob Newman and went on to work with the Black Country's Frank Skinner, including Fantasy Football.

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Achievement levels for Halesowen College students are 'excellent' and progression to further and higher education and employment is outstanding. Students enjoy fantastic facilities in a modern and easily accessible campus.

Thinking about the future and seeing yourself in the career of your choice can seem like a distant dream while you are still concentrating on your GCSEs but visiting Halesowen College and talking to friendly and informative staff can turn your dream into a reality.

Go along to the open day on Saturday, January 27 between 10am and 2pm to discover how they can help you take your own personal route to success.

Curriculum staff will be available to guide you in the right direction and you can sign up on the day to secure your place for September 2018.

A spokesman said: "By making Halesowen

Commercial feature

College your number ONE choice, you will be able to choose from the region's biggest range of courses, at all levels and an ability to combine subjects will help you to tailor a programme that best suits you.

"Whether you have your sights on university, a vocational qualification or an apprenticeship, our highly professional staff will be available to give you advice and guidance and help at every stage of the decision-making process."

Achievement levels for Halesowen College students are excellent and progression to further and higher education and employment

is outstanding. The spokesman added: "The college is number 2 in the UK for successful student progression. This year, 98 per cent of students achieved an A-level pass and 31 per cent attained high grades A*, A or B – 32 subjects achieved an outstanding 100 per cent pass rate!"

Vocational results were equally impressive, with 80 per cent of students gaining Triple Distinction Star grades in their Level 3 Extended Diplomas. As a result, over 750 Halesowen students have progressed to university this autumn.

Apprenticeships are also growing in popularity and Halesowen College offers an

exciting range of opportunities for you to get the qualifications that employers are looking for, while earning a wage.

Apprentices are highly likely to secure permanent employment at the end of their programme – 93.7 per cent of Halesowen apprentices who completed their apprenticeship in 2016/17 progressed to full-time employment.

Visitors to the college's open day will have the opportunity to see for themselves the fantastic facilities students enjoy in a modern and easily accessible campus.

Halesowen College is one of the best-equipped colleges in the region and an

extensive programme of investment has ensured that often students work in an 'industry standard' setting.

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It's a tough job but surrounded by the professional dancers and female stars Ore seemed to love hosting the tour

Debbie's the darling of Strictly

REVIEW

By Sue Altwater

Strictly Come Dancing Live Tour – Arena Birmingham
It seemed fairly obvious who the favourite was as we walked into Arena Birmingham to take our seats for the Strictly Come Dancing Live Tour.

"I can't wait to see Debbie McGee," said one. "She's so amazing," cooed another. And the packed Arena seemed to echo that. When she did her first dance – the jive – the applause was deafening.

And, after topping the leader board level with the reigning TV series champion Joe McFadden, it was Debbie who walked off with the glitter ball. This 11th tour kicked off in Birmingham on Friday night in stunning fashion with golden palm trees and statues – supposed to be the dancing Oscars? Certainly the professional dancers in their gold skimpy outfits would grace any film set.

The host, 2016 series winner Ore Oduba, came on to rapturous applause and introduced the professional dancers, including Amy Dowden from Dudley who runs a dance school with her fiancé.

Their performances were very impressive, as commented on by the three judges the usual Craig Revel Horwood –

"Did you leave your smile at home?" commented Ore who bantered well with him and the other two judges Dame Darcey Bussell, her first time judging on tour and the very sparkly-suited Bruno Tonioli.

Then on to the really important ones – the stars including, of course Debbie and Joe, with the rest of the magnificent seven including Gemma Atkinson, Susan Calman, Davood Ghadami, Jonnie Peacock and Alexandra Burke, who all performed their two favourite dances from the TV series with the judges giving their score, for guidance only.

In the end it was the audience's choice as they texted the name of the person they wanted to win. And with each text 10p went to Sport Relief.

The TV show has been nominated for a top award and the audience was encouraged by Ore to vote. There is no doubt both the series and the live tour are definitely worth a 10.

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Bikers rally around to help the homeless

KIND-HEARTED bikers braved the cold on a mass ride out from Halesowen in aid of a voluntary group for the homeless and vulnerable.

More than 60 riders took part in the West Midlands Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) Charity Run in aid of Stourbridge-based Leslie's Care Packages for the homeless.

Loaded up with hundreds of bags of essential provisions, riders set out en masse from Streetbike, Dudley Road, Halesowen, recently. They hit the roads for the 20-mile run to the Food Stop Café, near Bridgnorth, where they were greeted by Leslie's Care Packages founder, Vi Wood.

The voluntary group was set up by Vi in 2016 in loving tribute to her late husband Leslie, after she and her own family fell on difficult times. Since then, Vi has dedicated all her free time to helping people in need across the borough.

She said: "It was absolutely wonderful to see support from so many riders. Their amazing donations

will help make such a difference to people's lives. I'm overwhelmed and can't thank them enough."

Leslie's Care Packages not only helps the homeless, but also those who face difficult times, providing much-needed provisions and practical hands-on support.

Now the group is on a mission to set up a special drop-in centre.

Vi added: "Homelessness isn't a choice, it can happen to any one of us at any time for a host of reasons.

"Support has been simply fantastic so far and now we want to take our cause to the next level. We're on a mission to find a suitable venue for a dedicated drop-in centre locally, somewhere people can go to get food, shelter and warmth in winter."

Colin Brown, of MAG, said: "It is rewarding being able to help in some small way with the work that Vi and her team do for the community."

Visit www.lesliescarepackages.org for more information.



Leslie's Care Packages founder Vi Wood with members of West Midlands Motorcycle Action Group

Major warehouse development now to get under way

WORK is due to start on a multi-million pound industrial development in Tipton that could help deliver a major jobs boost for the Black Country.

It comes more than a year after developer CEG secured planning permission from Sandwell Council for its ambitious £132 million scheme to overhaul the historic Vaughan Trading Estate in Tipton, creating up to 1,000 jobs. Another 200 will be created by the building work.

The scheme involves flattening most of the existing buildings on land neighbouring the Thomas Dudley foundry and CAB Autos factory.

The start of work comes at a time when top quality industrial and warehouse space is in short supply.

Developer CEG aims to create up to 500,000 sq feet of space at Vaughan Park. Work on the first phase is set to commence shortly. CEG secured planning permission for the regeneration of the historic 28 acre site in September 2016 and is now managing the development of the first phase of units. This will offer up to five units totalling 80,000 sq ft and CEG says it will be ready for occupation later this year. Further 'design and build' opportunities are also available on the site.

Lawrence Escott, investment manager at CEG said: "This is a buoyant West Midlands commercial location."

Mayor's tax increase proposal is rejected

THE West Midlands Mayor's plans to add more than £10 a year onto council tax bills have been rejected by his own cabinet.

Andy Street initially wanted to raise his council tax precept by £12, but settled on £10.80 for each Band D property in a bid to pay for the running of his office and his transport plans.

But the Tory Metro Mayor's proposals were thrown out by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) cabinet, which includes five Labour council leaders and two Conservatives.

The Labour leaders – including Steve Eling from Sandwell Council and Sean Coughlan from Walsall Council – all voted against the plans.

Wolverhampton Council's Roger Lawrence was away and did not vote. However, his stand-in Councillor Pete Bilson, voted down the plan – a move that prompted surprise in some quarters after the WMCA agreed to prop up the city council's Interchange project, which has gone more than £30m over budget.

The cabinet, led by Coventry City Council leader George Duggins, is thought to have opposed the rise in protest at Government cuts to town hall budgets.

Councillor Coughlan said: "This was the first vote in a process that will see consultation and scrutiny, followed by a final vote in February. We were minded that as part of the consultation the public might say they don't want to put tax up, and on this occasion we agreed not to support the proposal. However, nothing is final and we do not want to pre-empt the decision of the consultation."

The £10.80-a-year increase had been proposed to raise £7.5 million to run the WMCA. If it is not approved, the Mayor could be forced to divert funds from other projects to cover the costs.

Parties on all sides believe that a compromise can be



Metro Mayor Andy Street

reached before next month's final vote.

A WMCA spokesman said: "The report to the combined authority board was the first formal stage of a scrutiny and consultation process that will run until February 9 when the board is scheduled to make the decision on the proposed budget."

"Options are being considered in light of the board's decision and further discussions on the draft budget will be held with WMCA members, the business community and other stakeholders in the run-up to February 9."

Mr Street, who was elected as the region's first Metro Mayor last year, recently described the figure as 'a relatively small amount' and said it was vital for the region's economic prosperity.

"We have said we are going to invest in our transport and bust congestion," he said.

"We have to actually have the capital investment available to do that."

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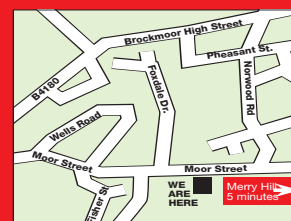
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Living in Dudley

Dive in and get life-saving skills

Swimmers are being urged to take the plunge and sign up to learn life-saving skills.

Dudley Council is offering the course at Halesowen Leisure Centre and Crystal Leisure Centre, Stourbridge.

The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) is running the lifeguard courses which can pave the way for a new career or just equip people with essential skills.

At Halesowen Leisure Centre, the course will run from February 19 to 23, between 9am and 5.30pm, with an exam taking place on the Friday. At Crystal Leisure Centre, the course will take place from February 20 to 23, between 12.30pm and 9.30pm and on February 24, between 7.30am and 5pm, with an exam taking place on the Saturday.

People will receive a course manual and special tuition. Those who complete the course successfully will get an official lifeguard qualification and certificate. The courses are open for people aged 16 and over who will be expected to take a pre-arranged swimming test.

The courses cost £245 and spaces must be pre-booked and a deposit paid. The remaining balance is to be paid before the course starts.

Visit www.dudley.gov.uk/sport or to provisionally book a place call 01384 812800 or email sport@dudley.gov.uk



There is still time to take advantage of the membership discount offer which applies to Crystal, Dudley and Halesowen leisure centres as well as The Dell Stadium



Offer helps you get fit for less

There's not long left to bag amazing savings on a year's membership at Dudley borough leisure centres.

The centres' festive fitness promotion ends on Wednesday, January 31 so there's still time to take advantage of the savings on offer and get fit and healthy this new year.

The offer enables people aged 16 and over to take out an annual membership for just £200, a saving of over £150.

Equivalent to just £16.67 per month it includes unlimited use of Lifestyles gyms, public swimming, fitness classes, badminton and squash (off-peak) and use of the running track at The Dell Stadium.

Training

Members will also receive a personal training programme and priority online booking. Junior members can also take advantage

of the festive fitness offer with a 12-month membership coming in at £120, equivalent to just £10 a month.

Membership is accepted at Crystal, Dudley and Halesowen leisure centres as well as The Dell Stadium, and is valid for 12 months.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member responsible for leisure centres, said: "This deal is a great opportunity for residents of the Dudley borough to get fit at a discounted rate."

He added: "With access to all three of the borough's leisure centres, as well as the Dell Stadium, this is a great way to get more exercise."

For more information on the discount contact the leisure centres on 01384 812800 or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/sport

For more information and useful advice on eating well and moving more visit www.lets-get.com

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Living in Dudley

An eight-page commercial spotlight

Transport schemes in pipeline

Two major transport improvement schemes are in the pipeline to make it easier for people to get to Dudley and enjoy its many attractions.

Plans for the seven-mile Metro line extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill were signed off by the Government in November as part of a quarter of a billion pound funding package to improve transport links across the West Midlands.

From Wednesbury, the seven-mile route will run past the Castle Hill attractions, into the heart of Dudley town centre and then on to the Waterfront, Merry Hill and into Brierley Hill town centre.

It will link Dudley and Brierley Hill to the rail network for the first time since the 1960s. At the moment work is set to start in 2019.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley has hailed the Metro as "a real game changer for the borough". He said bringing the Metro to the borough would boost regeneration, create jobs and significantly improve mobility around the region.

Councillor Harley said it was especially critical for the DY5 Enterprise Zone in Brierley Hill and would help create thousands of jobs.

Meanwhile, plans to create a multi-million pound innovation hub which will lead the worldwide development of very light rail technology, have been submitted.

Dudley Council, in partnership with Warwick Manufacturing Group, has submitted a planning application for the new very light rail innovation centre including a pedestrian foot bridge which links the building to Tipton Road, the future Metro line and car parking. If given the green light, the innovation centre will be at the heart of revolutionising very light rail technology and will see Dudley leading the way globally.

When completed, the new building will include meeting rooms, laboratories, teaching facilities, exhibition and conference space, a large engineering workshop and 2km twin



The Government has pledged a quarter of a billion pound funding package to improve transport links across the West Midlands



Artist's impression of the proposed light rail innovation centre. The multi-million pound project has been welcomed by Councillor Ian Kettle.

test tracks which will include test platforms. Research at the hub will investigate ways to reduce the weight and cost of railcars and track, enabling the creation of lower-cost connections between suburban and rural areas and providing a cheaper alternative to heavy rail and traditional 'Metro' urban transport systems.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said:

"This is one of the most exciting regeneration projects to take place in Dudley.

"If given the go-ahead, the innovation hub will put Dudley at the forefront of the world's development of very light rail technology. We will be able to market this as a product worldwide and significantly boost our opportunities to strengthen and grow our local economy." The planning application is expected to be determined in the spring.

A separate planning application for the test track was submitted to the council's planning department in October and is waiting to be determined. The proposed test track will be located along approximately 2km of disused railway line.

Earlier this year, the council was awarded £18million by the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership towards the cost of the project.



Living in
Dudley

Council plea for heritage helpers

Dudley Council is seeking budding historians to become heritage volunteers.

People interested in heritage and local history are being sought to share their knowledge and passion at local heritage activities and events. The project forms part of the township heritage scheme which aims to increase appreciation of the borough's town centres and its heritage attractions.

The council is hosting a special event at Dudley Archives and Local History Centre to explain the range of opportunities available and how the volunteers would be supported. Anyone interested can come along to the information day on Saturday, February 3 from 10.30am to 1pm.

There will be speakers from the museum service, the archives and local history team and the borough archaeologist who will talk about the opportunities available to volunteers. No experience of volunteering is necessary as there will be the opportunity to enrol on a free course with the adult and community learning team.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for regeneration and enterprise, said: "The heritage volunteers programme is a great way for people who are passionate about local history and heritage to share their knowledge with a new audience."

To book a free place, contact Simon Bradley on 01384 812368 or email simon.bradley@dudley.gov.uk

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Living in Dudley

Nominate your unsung heroes



Some of the guests and sponsors at last year's Civic Awards



The awards are presented at the Mayor's Ball



There was plenty of entertainment at last year's Mayor's Ball and Civic Awards

Volunteers and community stalwarts are in line for a prestigious award from the Mayor of Dudley.

People are being urged to nominate unsung heroes from the world of sport, art, community spirit, education, business and environment as part of the Mayor's Ball and Civic Awards.

The awards are presented by the Mayor at his annual charity ball in April which raises thousands of pounds for worthy causes.

The public now have six weeks to nominate the people who go above and beyond in their communities for the awards, which are this year in association with Excel 2000 Windows.

Local businesses have this year backed the awards which are all named after heroes of

the borough. They are the Duncan Edwards award for sport, sponsored by Nordic Timber Buildings; the Cedric Hardwicke award for arts sponsored by GMB Union; the Frank Foley award for community spirit sponsored by Dodd Group; the Thomas Attwood award for education which is sponsored by The School Travel Company; the Mike Holder award for business sponsored by Nuttalls and the William Shenstone award for environment, sponsored by Jessup Brothers.

Nominations for this year's awards are now open and people will be able to put names forward until March 5.

Councillor Dave Tyler, Mayor of Dudley, said: "There are people across the borough

quietly working day after day to serve their communities without seeking any thanks or reward.

"These are people who have achieved great things, worked tirelessly to help and improve the lives of others or helped grow the economy and create jobs. I urge people to take five minutes to complete a nomination and tell us about their community heroes.

Dedication

"We want to make sure that the hard work and dedication of these community stars is celebrated by giving them the recognition they deserve with one of our civic awards."

There is also a seventh trophy, the Mayor's

Pride of Dudley Award, which will be decided by a public vote in March.

The Mayor will choose four people or groups he feels have stood out to him on his civic engagements so far in his Mayoral year.

The public will then have the chance to vote online for the winner. Nominations cannot be put forward for this particular award. A judging panel will decide the other six categories.

The winners and runners-up will be presented with their prize – a bespoke piece of glass designed by local glass artist Alister Malcolm and a certificate by the Mayor of Dudley at the Mayor's Ball and Civic Awards at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill, in April.

The annual ball raises thousands of pounds

for the Mayor's chosen charities each year and award winners will have the chance to celebrate their achievements with distinguished guests.

People can nominate online at www.mayorofdudley.org.uk/civicawards or can pick up a nomination form from libraries and leisure centres across the borough.

Alternatively contact communications and public affairs on 01384 817449 for a form. People can also purchase tickets for the ball online at www.mayorofdudley.org.uk/civicawards or by calling 01384 811561.

Completed forms should be sent to Mayor's Civic Awards nominations, communications and public affairs, Dudley Council, FREEPOST MID22308, Dudley, DY1 1BR by March 5.

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A book of remembrance will be open to sign at the Archives in Tipton Road



Dudley-born football legend Duncan Edwards



The exhibition honouring the footballer will be in place for three months

Living in
Dudley

Fans remembering football legend

Fans of Dudley-born football legend Duncan Edwards will be able to share their memories in a special book of remembrance at the town's archives to mark the 60th anniversary of his tragic death.

Among the first to sign it was Tony Whelan, former Manchester United player and now assistant director of the club's academy. He was joined by Birmingham teenage prospect Dermot Mee, who is currently in the youth set-up at Old Trafford and hoping to follow in Duncan's footsteps.

The pair made a special trip from Manchester to get a glimpse of a new exhibition in Duncan's honour set to open to the public.

Tony Whelan said: "We are proud to follow in the footsteps of Duncan.

"He will be a Manchester United legend

forever, and it was a real honour and a privilege to come down to see this new exhibition."

Dermot Mee said: "Duncan was very special to everyone at Man United throughout his time at the club. He has inspired many of us players to continue right to the end, chasing our dreams.

"His story is a special one for me as obviously we're both from a similar neck of the woods, and it would be a dream to follow in his footsteps one day."

Manchester United and England legend Duncan was one of just eight players who tragically died from injuries sustained in the Munich air disaster on February 6, 1958. He died 15 days later on February 21, aged just 21.

A number of events will take place in his hometown to mark the anniversary.

The book of remembrance is now open to sign at the Archives in Tipton Road. It will form part of an extended exhibition honouring the footballer and will be in place for three months at the site near the Black Country Living Museum.

Commemoration

The museum, which does not normally open on Sunday, will be open especially from 12 noon to 2pm on Sunday, February 18 as part of the commemoration.

It will tie in with a special service of remembrance on the same day at St Francis's Church, where there are two stained glass windows celebrating Duncan's memory.

Around 80 Manchester United fans are expected to travel from the city on the day for

the service and to visit the museum, as well as visiting Duncan's grave at Queen's Cross cemetery and stopping off at his statue in the town centre.

A special wall of remembrance is also being set up at the church, where Duncan's funeral was held, for visitors. They will tell the story of his life, from his childhood to his days playing for the Red Devils and England, and is due to be unveiled the week beginning February 12.

A Duncan Edwards Tribute Dinner will take place at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill on February 21. Special guests will include former Manchester United manager Tommy Docherty and European Cup-winning goalkeeper Alex Stepney, as well as members of the Manchester United Former Players Association.

Councillor Dave Tyler, Mayor of Dudley, said:

"I would urge anyone who has any memories of Duncan Edwards to get along to this exhibition and put pen to paper in the book. He was a giant of the beautiful game, and he was Dudley born and bred."

In total Duncan made 177 appearances for Manchester United, scoring 21 goals, and playing his part in two league title wins in the mid to late 1950s. Nicknamed 'The Tank', he also won 18 caps for England, netting five times for the national side. He was once famously described by former team-mate and best friend Sir Bobby Charlton as "the only player who made me feel inferior".

For further information on any of the events, log onto www.duncanedwardstribute.com, email jwc@duncanedwardstribute.com or call Jim Cadman on 07971624627.

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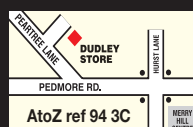
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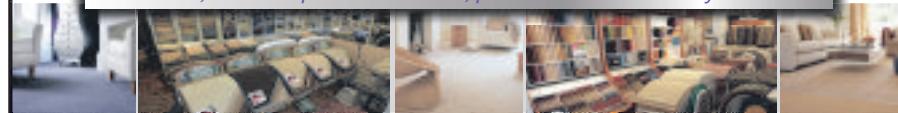
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Get walking for charities

The Mayor of Dudley is inviting people to take part in his charity Winter Walk on Sunday.

Anyone can join in the circular walk, which starts and finishes at the Bonded Warehouse in Stourbridge. It will start at 10am and see walkers take in a seven-mile round trip at their own pace to the Prestwood area along the canal. Dogs and children are welcome.

Mayor Councillor Dave Tyler said: "I hope that people will come on the sponsored walk to help kick-start their fitness campaigns and meanwhile help raise money for three worthy charities."

All profits from the walk will be donated to the Mayor's charities, which are Dudley Mind, the YMCA and Dudley Alzheimer's Society.

There will also be the chance to snap up a copy of a calendar produced by local artists and photographers. Proceeds from 'Reflections: Photographs and Paintings of Dudley' also go to Councillor Tyler's charities.

People can register at www.mayorofdudley.org.uk/events-1/mayors-winter-walk/form. Queries can be emailed to mayoral ambassador Sue Randle on suzylimesrdd@hotmail.co.uk or by calling 07412 531924. Entry fee is just £1 and is payable on arrival.



Comedian Paul Chowdhry is on the bill

There's lots of great live entertainment and events coming to Dudley Borough Halls in 2018.

World-renowned psychic Sally Morgan – one of the UK's most successful touring acts – returns to Dudley Town Hall on February 1 with her 10th anniversary Kisses to Heaven Tour.

A new season of live theatre broadcasts at Stourbridge TSC Hall begins on February 14 with the RSC's brilliant production of Twelfth Night, starring former EastEnders star Kara Tointon and Adrian Edmondson.

Upcoming children's events in Stourbridge include returning magic and illusion show High Jinx on February 21 and

the wildly inventive Hoot Owl, Master of Disguise on May 12.

Dance to the Music, an exciting show created by and starring Strictly star Kristina Rihanoff, comes to Dudley on February 27 – featuring an all-star line-up including X Factor finalist Chris Maloney and Dudley's Beth Sherburn.

Sold-out

Comedians Paul Chowdhry, Doreen, Jason Manford and Joe Lycett will all be performing to sold-out crowds with just a few tickets remaining for each of their forthcoming tour shows.

Other comedians set to grace the stage



World-renowned psychic Sally Morgan

in 2018 include David Baddiel on April 19, Shappi Khorsandi on May 5 and Chris Ramsey on May 18, with more shows due to be announced soon.

Live music shows from M People's Heather Small, taking place on May 8, and legendary US vocal group The Drifters on May 25 are also proving very popular, with tickets selling well for both gigs.

Full listings and tickets for all shows can be found by visiting www.boroughhalls.co.uk or by calling the Box Office on 01384 812812. You can also follow Dudley Borough Halls on Twitter @BoroughHalls and keep up-to-date on Facebook by visiting www.fb.me/BoroughHalls



There are a few tickets left to see comic Joe Lycett



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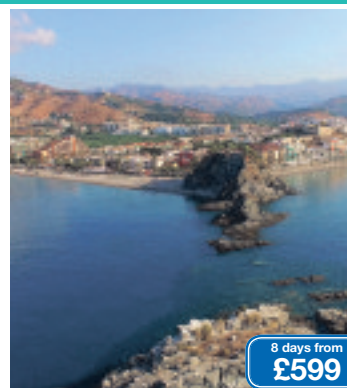
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At Dudley Museum there are a host of activities and events, including a Diddy Dinos, a dinosaur day, a Treasures of Museum tour, a pottery session, a free family trail and a family fun day

Stacks to do on family day out

There's stacks to do at the Red House Glass Cone over the next few months.

It's a great place to take the family with free admission and parking, baby changing facilities and the on-site Red Cone Coffee House.

There are free family trails available every day, suitable for the over eights, including a Titanic trail which gets youngsters to look for Titanic-themed clues around the site.

There are drop-in Sticky Saturdays craft sessions, featuring free paper craft activities for ages four-plus.

Youngsters can come along with their family and have a go at being messy and getting sticky... and the team tidies up!

The drop-in craft activity runs on the following Saturdays: February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19 and June 16 between 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Allow about 30 minutes for the activity.

There are free glass blowing demonstrations every weekend in the hot glass studio. Visitors

can watch as glass artists transform a molten piece of glass into a glass, vase, platter or object. Demonstrations take place every weekend from 1.30pm to 3.30pm and daily during school holidays from 11am to 2.30pm.

The cone hosts a range of family events throughout the year. The events are free entry, with a £3 charge for crafts. Each event includes a variety of activities for children and families, which could include interactive storytelling, crafts and a trail around a theme.

The next event is Minibeasts Day on Wednesday, February 21. Activities run between 10am and 2.30pm and cost £3.

There's a chance to make something in glass with a drop-in session on Saturday, February 3. Youngsters can make a key ring between 11.30pm and 1.30pm at a cost of £3.

There's a bookable session in the afternoon where people can make a glass unicorn between 2pm and 2.45pm and 3pm and 3.45pm. This costs £6 and must be booked in advance. There are further fusion sessions on

Tuesday, February 20 at 10.30am, 11.30am, 1pm and 2pm and again on Thursday, February 22 from 10.30am to 2.30pm with the chance to make glass bugs for just £5.

● Red House Glass Cone (RHGC) is based at High Street, Wordsley, DY8 4AZ. Opening hours are Monday – Friday, 10am – 3pm and Saturday & Sunday, 11am – 4pm

For further information call 01384 812381 or 01384 815571 or follow the museums service on facebook @redhousecone or @dudley museum and twitter @glass_museum @redhousecone and @dudleymuseum

Over at Dudley Museum at The Archives there are a host of activities and events.

Things kick off with Diddy Dinos on Friday, from 10am to 11am and 11.30am to 12.30pm suitable for pre-schoolers. This bookable session costs £2.50 per child.

On the following day at 10.30pm until 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 3.30pm there's a dinosaur day. This drop-in event is free.

There are a range of sessions for adults,

including how to make an exploding box card on Friday, February 9 from 10.30am to 12.30pm. This bookable session costs £6. Visitors can also learn more about the collection with a Treasures of Museum tour on Wednesday, February 14 at 10.30am, 11.30am or 12.30pm.

There's a chance to give pottery a spin with a three-part session costing £30. The first session runs on Thursday, February 15 from 10.30am to 12.30pm. These continue on Thursday, March 15 and Thursday, April 19.

There's a free family trail from Saturday, February 17 to Saturday, February 24 from 10am to 3pm around the museum (closed Sundays). There's a family fun day on Friday, February 23 with a Superhero Day. Activities run 10am – 2.30pm and cost £3.

● Dudley Museum @ The Archives is based at Dudley Archives & Local History Centre Tipton Road, Dudley, DY1 4SQ. Opening hours are 10am – 4pm, Monday to Saturday. Closed Sundays.



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Living in Dudley

Reminder to get free flu jab

People are being advised to take up offers of free flu jabs.

Public Health England (PHE) in the West Midlands is urging people to help prevent the spread of flu.

It's not too late to get the vaccine, which is particularly recommended for people in higher risk groups such as pregnant women, people with a long-term medical condition or those aged over 65.

Dr Helen Carter, Deputy Director at Public Health England (PHE) West Midlands, said: "The vaccine is the best defence we have against the spread of flu and it isn't too late for people to go to their GP or pharmacist and get vaccinated – especially those in risk groups. Talk to your GP, pharmacist or midwife about your eligibility."

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "Flu is a really unpleasant illness, and in some cases can actually pose a threat to life which is why it is so important for people who are more vulnerable to take up the offer of free flu vaccinations."

Symptoms of flu include sudden onset of fever, cough as well as sore throat, aching muscles and joints.

The best advice is to rest, keep warm and drink plenty of water.

People can find out more about staying well this winter at <https://www.nhs.uk/staywell>



Residents across the borough have saved over half a million pounds on their energy bills since the Big Switch was launched in Dudley in June 2013

Make the switch and save cash

Dudley borough residents looking to save cash in 2018 can make a start by saving money on their energy bills and taking part in Dudley Council's energy saving Big Switch scheme.

The council-run Big Switch has been running for several years and is growing in popularity as a result of the great savings that can be made on home gas and electricity bills.

Energy bill savings of up to £300 a year are typically made when registering for the Big Switch and market leading deals are on offer, not available elsewhere.

With gas and electricity bills on the rise and research indicating that people are reluctant to switch because they find it too confusing, the Big Switch is the perfect solution.

Part of a national government initiative, the Big Switch scheme sees councils coming together and taking part in a collective energy switching auction.

By joining together they are able to get the very best energy deals through the power of bulk buying.

If you are on a standard variable tariff you will certainly be set to see big savings through the Big Switch.

Suggestions are that the energy prices will continue to rise throughout this year, so it's well worth getting the very best deal you can.

To register with Dudley's Big Switch, visit the council's website – www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch

Alternatively people can register simply and

easily by calling Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345, they will then be guided through the simple process.

They will need to have their current tariff details and fuel usage (shown on the your most recent bill) to hand.

This auction will run until February 12 and then people will have the option of switching energy supplier to the company offering the very best deal.

There is however no obligation to do so, so there really is nothing to lose!

Councillor Laura Taylor, cabinet member for housing, said: "As we enter a new year, now's the time to look at money saving initiatives which offer real value for money."

"Dudley's Big Switch is a trusted and hassle-

free way to save on home energy bills. It's simple to get registered, clear instructions are provided and the switching is all handled for you."

"The deals offered through the scheme are market-leading and there is nothing to lose. We want our residents to ensure that they keep affordably warm at home."

The Big Switch is open to all householders, including people living in rented accommodation, those with a prepayment meter and people with a fuel debt of up to £500 or less.

Since the scheme began in Dudley in June 2013 the collective savings made by borough residents has topped over half a million pounds.

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Time to get ready for Byrne's night

Stand-up star Ed Byrne is returning to the West Midlands with his new show, **Spoiler Alert**. He will headline Stafford Gatehouse tomorrow and Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday.

Ed is on the road after a total sell-out Edinburgh Fringe run with his biggest ever tour to date. He says: "I originally intended to call the show 'I'll Millennial You in a Minute', but my promoter considered the title 'off-puttingly baffling'."

In the show, Ed explores the thin line between righteous complaining and brat-like whining and asks, 'are we right to be fed up, or are we spoiled?'

Ed is recognised as one of the finest observational comics in the industry. His TV credits include *Mock The Week*, *Have I Got News For You*, *The Graham Norton Show*, *Live At The Apollo*, *The One Show*, *Comic Relief Bake Off 2015*, *The World's Most Dangerous Roads* and, most recently, he and Dara O Briain filmed the follow up to their *Big Adventure* show for BBC Two entitled *Dara and Ed's Road to Mandalay*.

He will return to the region to headline Lichfield's Garrick on April 24.

Ed has been an acclaimed stand-up (with audiences and critics alike) for 20 years. His success with shows such as the *Roaring Forties*, *Different Class* and the 1998 Perrier-nominated *A Night At The Opera* led to him appearing on the box in the diverse likes of *Mock The Week*, *Father Ted*, *The One Show* and *All Star Mr & Mrs*, while his love of hillwalking resulted in him writing a regular column for *The Great Outdoors* magazine.

NATURAL

In fact, his love of natural history has crossed into television with appearances on *The One Show* (abseiling in Snowdonia), *Countryfile* (climbing Sgùrr Dearg, the 'inaccessible pinnacle' on Skye) and presenting items on *Volcano Live* (BBC).

The Irish comic is firmly of a belief that the current breed of parents spoil their kids rotten whether it's to do with the ever-increasing size of garden trampolines, or his own kids' demand for elderflower cordial.

"My dad wasn't a bad dad, he was just a 1970s dad. If I could never see my children ever again from this moment on, I've already done more parenting than he did in my entire life. But, of course, I made a conscious decision that I was going to be an awesome dad. My wife will come back with tales from her friends of how awful their husbands are and she'll see me smiling and say 'alright, stop congratulating yourself just because such and such can't be left alone with their children for two minutes'."

In his new touring show, the perfectly-titled *Spoiler Alert*, Ed compares and contrasts the old-school child-rearing days with 21st century methods and suggests that there are different ways to learn how to be a mum or dad.

"I grew up in what I would call an aspirational household in that my parents bettered themselves over the course of my childhood. My mother was a radiographer and ended up a lecturer in radiography, while my dad was a sheet metal worker and went up to a supervisory role. I'd still say that you are expected to do a lot more parenting than our parents did and that's a weird thing because you tend to think that your parents are who you learnt parenting from. But you don't, really, it's more that you look around to see what's going on with other parents."

For the show, Ed extends his analysis on the culture of entitlement to look at areas where we could perhaps do with being spoiled a little bit more. "Where I think we're not acting spoiled enough is in the political arena. We have a tendency to accept what's happening and that's where we should be acting more entitled: we are literally entitled to the government we want. We're spoiled in all these little ways, but not spoiled enough."

As well as stories about his two young sons, Ed weaves in routines about running out of petrol in the most awkward place imaginable, helping rescue an injured

Byrne out – Ed brings his latest tour to Stafford and Birmingham



man in the Cairngorms, and the nation-dividing campaign and result of the EU referendum. His way of tackling Brexit is to draw an analogy with the time his son was determined to touch an electric fence with his dad trying to warn him of the dangers.

"I was telling the story of the electric fence for a while, and then suddenly it struck me that it was Brexit in microcosm. I don't want to alienate half of the population or maybe a third of my audience, but it works as an analogy whichever side you're on. The government told you not to do this and that it would be a terrible idea, but you said 'no, we want to do it anyway'. So now we're doing it and it's proving a terrible idea. I do think it's a fair analogy, but no doubt for some it will come across as me being a typical liberal elite Remoaner."

Spoiler Alert also continues a theme that he's tackled in previous shows, that of his gradual shift from being a working-class Dubliner to a fully paid-up rural-residing member of the middle classes. Where once he would do routines slating 4x4 owners, he is now the proud(ish) owner of such a vehicle. And in the poster for his tour, he brandishes other signifiers of social mobility: a bowtie and chainsaw. "It's one of two I own: that one is the smaller of the two," Ed remarks of his chainsaw rather than his neckwear. "I use it for firewood, both for my wood burning stove and also for the barbecue. The first time I used one I was fine, though I think it worried my parents

I keep a tour diary now of places where the curries are disappointing

that I had bought a chainsaw." Having premiered *Spoiler Alert* at the Fringe and used the month of August to hone the show, Ed is happy. "Being on stage is enjoyable and this part of the writing process is enjoyable. The empty page though is a scary thing. On the first leg of the tour I'll do about an hour and 15 minutes, plus I'll have a support act. I keep a tour diary now of places where the curries are disappointing and where they are good and where audiences have been good before."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see **The Ticket** in your Express & Star every Friday.

Tips for the top The Amazons



We're delighted to now be headline act in Brum

THEY'RE starting their headline tour at Birmingham's Institute next Thursday, February 1.

And The Amazons couldn't be happier about that. Because in a former life and in a former band, they once played there as a blink-and-you'll-miss-them support act.

Frontman Matt Thomson and bandmates Elliot Briggs and Chris Alderton opened for The Mystery Jets back in 2012.

"That feels like a long time ago," says Matt, whose band enjoyed a top ten hit with their self-titled debut album in May.

"We landed a support slot with The Mystery Jets. It was us and Swim Deep on the bill. I only just caught

up with the Mystery Jets at a Christmas party at the end of last year. I told them they were great to us when we were supporting them. We had a really good time. So to go back to that same venue, but as the headline act, is really important to us. It's going to be great."

The Amazons formed in 2014 in Reading and were snapped up by Fiction Records in 2015. They recorded their debut album in 2016 and released it in May. It went straight in at number eight, cementing their status as one of Britain's most exciting new bands.

By then they had been included in the BBC's Sound of 2017 and MTV's Brand New 2017 lists. They were also named a band to listen to in 2017 by NME, The Independent and BBC Radio 1. This is the year when they must deliver on that promise.

Jonnn hopes his talk will be Atomic



Ned's Atomic Dustbin frontman Jonnn Penney has been thinking about writing his autobiography.

He's 50, he's got a couple of kids – and he wants to write down his stories before he forgets them.

The only trouble is he doesn't know where to start. So he's planning a special appearance at Wolverhampton Literature Festival tomorrow (Saturday) at the city's Slade Rooms from 8.45pm. He'll be with Ned's guitarist Ratt – playing songs, telling stories and answering questions.

Jonnn explains: "The thing is, I'm

too damn lazy to do it myself. I'm also frightened at the prospect of writing enough words to make a book. And also, as has been said, I'm very much a reactionary person and I need a nudge. I sat down and started writing this book and I couldn't remember. So we thought we'd do something where people can prompt me – where the fans can ask questions and jog my memory – then I'll be able to do it.

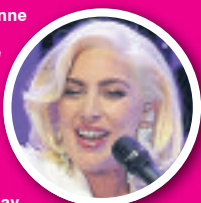
"Once the fans get me started, they transport me back to my flat in Lye where I'm hungover and it's early in the morning and I've just written a few lyrics. I'm a waffer, so I just need encouragement to get

me going. I'm not stupid enough to think there's a massive market out there for the memoirs of a singer from a lesser known indie band from England. But it's worth having it down somewhere."

Jonnn has played a huge number of gigs during his career, headlining festival stages, playing sell out gigs at Wolves Civic Hall and featuring on Top of the Pops. He will be fronting the Neds again at a sold out 02 Academy in Birmingham at the Love From Stourbridge gig with The Wonder Stuff on April 14, the first of two consecutive nights at the venue.

Gaga is Joanne for Arena dates

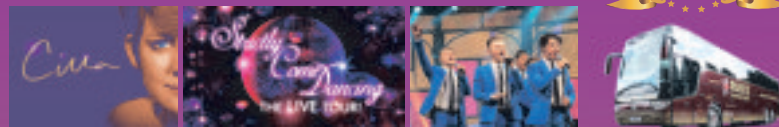
Lady Gaga brings her Joanne world tour to Birmingham with gigs at the city centre Arena on Wednesday and at the Genting Arena the following night. Other key gigs include psychedelic rock at the Hare and Hounds in Kings Heath with Americans Wand on Monday and Moon Duo on Tuesday. Will Varley previews his Spirit of Minnie album at the 02 Institute on Tuesday, the same night Terry Bickers (House of Love/Levitaton) teams up with Pete Fij at Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton.



Dance, romance and murder on stage

Dance dominates over the next few days with Strictly's Anton de Beke and Erin Boag in action at the Symphony Hall on Saturday with dancers, singer Lance Ellington and the London Concert Orchestra. Then the Russian State Ballet of Siberia make their annual visit to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre to present The Nutcracker (Sunday, matinee), Romeo and Juliet (Monday) and Swan Lake (Tuesday). Meanwhile, murder swap thriller Strangers on a Train is at the New Alexandra Theatre (Monday-Saturday) with John Middleton (Emmerdale), Christopher Harper (Coronation Street) and Hannah Tointon (Mr Selfridge). Carole King musical Beautiful returns to Birmingham Hippodrome from Wednesday and the romantic Brief Encounter opens at Birmingham Rep on Friday, February 2.

It's Showtime...



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04	Thriller	Hilton	1	135.00
10	Phantom of the Opera	Hilton	1	145.00
10	Strictly Come Dancing	Doubletree	1	175.00
10	Mamma Mia	Hilton	1	169.50
10	Wicked	Day Excursion	-	75.00
11	Strictly Come Dancing	Hilton Waldorf	1	195.00
14	Cilla The Musical – Oxford	Day Excursion	-	69.50
15	Annie	Day Excursion	-	75.00
18	Sunday Lunch Thames Cruise	Hilton Waldorf	1	159.50
24	Wicked or Phantom	Hilton	1	From 135.00
MARCH	SHOW / EXCURSION	HOTEL	NIGHTS	PRICE £
01	Warner Studios – Harry Potter	Day Excursion	-	69.50
02	Woman in Black and Afternoon Tea Cruise	Marriott	2	199.50
02	Mamma Mia or Kinky Boots and Afternoon Tea Cruise	Marriott	2	From 225.00
02	Phantom of the Opera	Marriott	2	199.50
02	Adele Tribute plus Isle of Wight Tour	Hilton	2	185.00
03/10/17/24	Harry Potter plus Film Locations	Hilton	1	149.50
05	D Day Divas Tour, Live Entertainment & A Tea	Day Excursion	-	57.50
09/16/23	Diana Fashion Story, The Shard and A Tea Cruise	Marriott	2	249.50
16	42nd Street	Marriott	2	235.00
16	Les Miserables	Marriott	2	239.50
17	Cilla The Musical	Doubletree	1	159.50
18	Ideal Home Show Exhibition	Day Excursion	-	39.50
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WOLVERHAMPTON
MAGAZINE

CHOICE



Rob Beckett
All Together Now (BBC1, 7.15pm)
New series. Rob Beckett hosts the musical talent show with a twist, as a range of singers step on-stage for a chance to win a £50,000 cash prize. The judging panel takes the form of 'The 100', a large collective of music experts and performers from all over the UK led by Geri Horner. However, in this talent show, the key to success is encouraging the judges to sing along too, and the more panellists each singer manages to win over, the better their chances of proceeding to the grand final.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Mary Berry Everyday. (R) 12.00 Football Focus. 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.15 Tennis: Australian Open 2018. 2.30 Live Bowls: World Indoor Championships. Coverage of the open singles semi-finals. 4.30 Final Score. 5.25 BBC News. 5.35 Regional Programme. 5.40 And They're Off for Sport Relief.
6.25 Pointless Celebrities. Mark Steel, Marcus Brigstocke, Nicky Campbell, Rachel Burden, Liz Kershaw, D.J. Nihal, Shaun Keaveny and Nemone take part in a radio-themed edition of the quiz.
7.15 All Together Now. New series. Rob Beckett hosts the musical talent show in which contestants must successfully encourage members of a 100-strong judging panel to sing along with them to win.
8.20 Casualty. Dylan struggles to keep his alcoholism under control, as staff on the ED deal with what is suspected to be a case of domestic abuse. Meanwhile, Ethan's first day as Clinical Lead fails to go according to plan, as he finds himself veering wildly from one disaster to another, and he starts to understand the real pressure of leading a team.
9.10 BBC News; Weather.
9.30 Hard Sun. Hicks uncovers the extent of Renko's investigation into the Alex Butler murder, and journalist Will Benedetti's connection to Hard Sun makes him the sprae killer's next target. When Blackwood publicly announces that only Fr Dennis can stop him killing again, the priest is immediately cast as a figure of public hate, and London becomes a city under siege. With chaos unfolding all around, Grace gives Daniel some shocking information about his father. Pre-apocalyptic thriller, starring Agyness Deyn.
10.30 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. Gary Lineker presents action from the fourth-round ties, including Newport County v Tottenham Hotspur at Rodney Parade and Liverpool v West Bromwich Albion at Anfield; National Lottery Update.
12.00 The NFL Show. 12.30 Film: What Doesn't Kill You. (2008) 2.05 Weather for the Week Ahead. 2.10 BBC News.

BBC2

**6.05 The Wonder of Animals. (R) 6.35 Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. 7.05 The Pets Factor. 7.30 Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch. 7.45 Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch. 8.00 The Denjenglers. 8.30 Deadly Top 10. (R) 9.00 Robot Wars. (R) 10.00 Robot Wars. (R) 11.00 The Snow Wolf Family and Me. (R) 12.00 The Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure. (R) 1.00 A Vicar's Life. (R) 1.30 Film: The Diary of Anne Frank. (1959) 4.15 Italy's Invisible Cities. (R) 5.15 Trust Me, I'm a Doctor. (R) 5.45 Tom Kerridge: Lose Weight for Good. (R) 6.15 Hugh's Wild West. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall investigates efforts to bring beavers back to the Dorset-Devon border, and a swan herd at Abbotsbury Swannery rounds up his charges for a health check.
7.15 A House Through Time. David Olusoga follows the story of the Liverpool house residents from 1891 to 1945, including a family of saddlers who lived there for four decades and a docker with a secret. (R)
8.15 Dad's Army. Mainwaring and the platoon dress as firemen to take part in an initiative exercise, but soon find themselves tackling a real fire. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and Clive Dunn. (R)
8.45 Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs. Paul Merton travels into the secret heart of the Rough Bounds of Knoydart, by way of Loch nan Uimh, Loch Morar, Loch Nevis and Loch Arkalg.
9.15 Qi XL. Josh Widdicombe, Stephen K Amos and Gail Beaton join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig in an extended edition of the unconventional quiz.
10.00 Darcy Bussell: Dance Beyond Boundaries. The former ballerina reveals how street dance group Boy Blue Entertainment and Canadian-based ice dancing collective Le Patin Libre are helping to revolutionise modern dance.
10.30 Film: Birdman: Or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance). (2014) Premiere. A faded movie star wrestles with a personal crisis as he tries to put on a disaster-afflicted Broadway play. Oscar-winning drama, with Michael Keaton and Edward Norton.
12.20 Bowls: World Indoor Championships Highlights. 1.20 Film: Girl with a Pearl Earring. (2003) 2.55 This Is BBC Two.**

ITV

**6.00 CITV: Sooty. 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.20 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.35 Dino Dana. (R) 6.50 Super 4. (R) 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 7.05 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister Six. 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) 7.55 Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) 8.10 Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) 8.30 Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Do! (R) 9.05 Scrambled!: Wishart. (R) 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 James Martin's Saturday Morning. 11.25 The Hungry Sailors. (R) 12.25 Countrywise. (R) 12.55 ITV News; Weather. 1.00 Dancing on Ice. (R) 3.15 Catchphrase. (R) 4.00 Tipping Point. (R) 5.00 The Chase. (R)
6.00 Regional Programme; Weather. 6.05 ITV News; Weather.
6.20 New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates another round of viewer-submitted comedy clips, including a hoverboard destroying an office, and a man falling through a casino floor.
6.45 Take Me Out. A warehouse worker from Wolverhampton and a musician from Leicester are among the men seeking the approval of Paddy McGuinness's panel of 30 single ladies.
8.00 The Voice UK. The fourth round of Blind Auditions arrives, as Emma Willis ushers another selection of would-be stars onto the stage to have their skills appraised. As ever, coaches Jennifer Hudson, Tom Jones, Will.i.am and Olly Murs are all seated with their backs to the contestants, meaning they must judge each performer's skill based solely on the power of their voice. Any of the would-be stars who are welcomed to join a coach's team will be in with a chance of ultimately claiming a record deal with Polydor.
9.30 Through the Keyhole. Stephen Mulhern, Louis Walsh and Rochelle Humes form the panel as Keith Lemon challenges them to guess the mystery owners of three more celebrity homes.
10.30 ITV News; Weather.
10.45 Film: Jaws: The Revenge. (1987) The remaining members of the Brody family are terrorised by a bloodthirsty great white shark in the Bahamas. Thriller sequel, starring Michael Caine, Lorraine Gary and Lance Guest.
12.15 Jackpot247. 3.00 Babushka. (R)**

CHANNEL 4

**6.15 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) 6.40 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) 7.05 The King of Queens. (R) 7.35 The King of Queens. (R) 8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.55 Frasier. (R) 9.30 Frasier. (R) 10.00 Frasier. (R) 10.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 11.00 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 11.25 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 11.55 The Simpsons. (R) 12.25 The Simpsons. (R) 12.55 The Simpsons. (R) 1.25 Comedy Dine with Me. (R) 2.25 Coast vs Country. (R) 3.25 A Place in the Sun. (R) 4.30 A Place in the Sun. (R) 5.30 The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R)
6.30 Channel 4 News.
7.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore the Marne-Rhine Canal. Last in the series. (R)
8.00 Village of the Year. Archaeologist Alex Langlands, garden designer Juliet Sargeant and craft expert Patrick Grant are called on to decide which five villages from this week's heats should claim a place in the grand final. Plus, Penelope Keith hears more from the five contenders in the South East Zone.
9.00 Holocaust: The Revenge Plot. Documentary, making use of previously undisclosed recordings and candid interviews to tell the story of the Avengers, a secret organisation of Holocaust survivors who came up with a brutal plot in 1946 to seek vengeance on behalf of the six million Jews killed by Hitler and the Nazis. In the dying days of the Second World War, "warrior-poet" Abba Kovner came to the conclusion that the prosecution of a handful of Nazis would not amount to justice, and instead claimed only "an eye for an eye" could possibly redress the balance. With the help of a band of like-minded individuals, Kovner planned to murder six million Germans by infiltrating cities and poisoning water supplies. This film also showcases a clandestine recording, made in 1985 at the dying Kovner's request, that identifies all the leading conspirators and how they carried out their operations.
10.00 Film: The Monuments Men. (2014) Fact-based drama, directed by and starring George Clooney.
12.20 Film: Snake Eyes. (1998) 2.00 The Last Leg. (R) 2.55 Hollyoaks. (R)**

CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake! 10.10 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. 10.45 Funniest Fails, Fails & Flops. (R) 11.10 Police Interceptors. (R) 12.05 Police Interceptors. (R) 1.05 The A-Team. (R) 2.05 The A-Team. (R) 3.00 Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) 4.00 Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) 5.00 Rich House, Poor House. (R)
6.00 The Wonderful World of Puppies. The development of puppies' senses. The dalmatian litter has reached six weeks old. As a breed they are susceptible to deafness, so they are taken for to the vet for a crucial hearing test. A new litter of golden doodles reveal how puppy eyesight develops week by week, cameras track the progress of a springer spaniel as he begins training to become a mountain search-and-rescue dog, and the labrador puppies reach six weeks old – time to find out if they have the senses and skills to pass their guide dog test.
7.00 Greatest Ever Celebrity Wind Ups. Joe Pasquale revisits more celebrity pranks, including the time Justin Bieber's elaborate trick for Taylor Swift, and incognito meet-and-greets with Michael Buble and Mark Hamill.
8.00 Blind Date. Paul O'Grady plays matchmaker for a reformed "bad-boy" and a nightclub hostess, and past couples Jonathan and Kelly, and Joanna and David return to dish the dirt on their dates.
8.55 5 News Weekend.
9.05 Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Bristol City v Queens Park Rangers, and Ipswich Town v Wolverhampton Wanderers.
10.00 Celebrity Big Brother. Catching up with the celebrities as they react to Friday night's double eviction, revealing how the departure of two housemates has affected the remaining contestants.
11.05 The X-Files. Mulder and Scully uncover a medical laboratory where extreme genetic experimentation has been going on for decades, breeding subjects who possess unexpected and dangerous powers. (R)
12.00 Britain's Greatest Brides. 12.10 SuperCasino. 3.10 Film: Enemies Closer. (2013) 4.30 Access. 4.45 House Doctor. (R) 5.10 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.35 House Busters. (R)**

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Children of the Holocaust 8.00 Surviving the Holocaust – Freddie Knoller's War 9.00 Spiral 10.55 Top of the Pops: 1985 12.05 The Easybeats to AC/DC: The Story of Aussie Rock 1.05 New York Rock at the BBC 2.05 Joy of the Guitar Riff 3.05 Close
ITV2
11.30 Take Me Out 12.45 You've Been Framed! Gold 1.10 Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) 2.10 FYI Daily 2.15 Film: St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) 3.25 Film: The Flintstones (1994) 4.25 FYI Daily 4.30 Film: The Flintstones (1994) 5.10 Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003) 6.15 FYI Daily 6.20 Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003) 9.00 Film: Fast & Furious 5 (2011) 10.00 FYI Daily 10.05 Film: Fast & Furious 5 (2011) 11.35 Family Guy 12.35 American Dad! 1.35 Ibiza Weekend 2.30 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 2.55 Teleshopping 5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
1.50 Rosemary & Thyme 2.55 Film: Columbo: Sex and the Married Detective (1989) 4.55 Midsummer Murders 11.00 Foyle's War 1.00 On the Buses 2.00 ITV3 Nightscreen 2.30 Teleshopping
ITV4
1.30 ITV Racing: Live from Cheltenham. Coverage of Festival Trials Day. 4.00 Film: Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986) 5.00 FYI Daily 5.05 Film: Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986) 6.05 Storage Wars 7.00 Darts: The Masters Live. Coverage of day two from Milton Keynes. 11.00 Film: Assault on Precinct 13 (2005) 12.05 FYI Daily 12.10 Film: Assault on Precinct 13 (2005) 1.10 Car Crash Global: Caught on Camera 2.10 The Protectors 2.40 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping
E4
11.40 Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009) 1.30 Film: Toy Story That Time Forgot (2014) 2.00 The Goldbergs 4.30 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: The Inbetweeners Movie (2011) 11.00 Gogglebox 12.00 Naked Attraction 1.10 Nude Tube 2.15 Gogglebox 3.10 Naked Attraction 4.05 The Goldbergs 4.30 How I Met Your Mother 5.15 Rude(s) Tube
Film4
11.00 Courage Mountain (1990) 1.00 Stuart Little 2 (2002) 2.35 Patton (1970) 5.50 Avatar (2009) 9.00 Exodus: Gods and Kings (2014) 11.55 The Midnight Meat Train (2008) 2.00 Series 7: The Contenders (2001) 3.55 Close

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A large, modern, detached house with a double garage, situated in a quiet residential area. The property features a spacious living area, a fully equipped kitchen, and a large garden. Price: £250,000.

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

The Town, Channel 5, 12.05am

A thief takes a bank manager hostage while he and his gang make their getaway, only to later learn she lives in the same neighbourhood as him. As FBI agents close in, he tries to befriend her to make sure she cannot identify him, but as he falls in love with her, he considers changing his ways - risking the fury of his unstable partner in crime. Drama, directed by and starring Ben Affleck. With Rebecca Hall and Jeremy Renner. (2010)

TUESDAY

The Wrong Nanny, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Premiere. Stella hires a nanny to take care of her twin boys, only to find out the woman she hired is her daughter that she gave up for adoption. Thriller, starring Madison Adams. (2017)

WEDNESDAY

The Stranger Inside, Channel 5, 3.20pm

Premiere. A woman and her husband who are trying to have a baby become the target of their fertility doctor. Thriller, starring Sofia Milos. (2016)



The Town, Monday, Channel 5, 12.05am

THURSDAY

Escaping Dad, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A woman goes on the run with her children to escape an abusive husband. But he is the District Attorney and uses his legal connections to put out an amber alert on his missing family. Thriller, starring Sunny Mabrey, Jason Wiles, Grace Van Dien and Rick Overton. (2017)

FRIDAY

My Daughter Is Innocent, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Two teenage girls are accused of a brutal murder and one mother is determined to prove her daughter's innocence. However, all may not be as it seems. Thriller, starring Victoria Pratt. (2017)

Calvary, BBC2, 11.05pm

A priest tries to put his community's affairs in order as he waits for a meeting with a man who has vowed to kill him. Drama, starring Brendan Gleeson, Chris O'Dowd, Kelly Reilly, Aidan Gillen and Dylan Moran. (2014)

Matilda looks to connect the dots in thrilling new series

Sometimes, the scariest dramas aren't the goriest or the ones that make you jump, but the subtle stories that rely on mood and a slowly building sense of disquiet that creeps up on you.

That's what writer Kris Mrksa is aiming to do with his new six-part series Requiem, which is partly inspired by such classic psychological horrors as The Innocents, Rosemary's Baby and Don't Look Now.

Or as actress Lydia Wilson, who plays the main character Matilda Gray, puts it when asked what drew her to the role: "What I really liked was the fact that it was a psychological drama, but in a sneaky way. Matilda is a girl from London in Converse trainers, whose life suddenly spirals into this giant mystery."

"Requiem starts off with the banality of everyday London, and then it suddenly goes, 'Woah!'"

Although she may dress like an ordinary twentysomething, the first episode makes it clear that there is

something unusual about Matilda - she's a successful cellist. In fact, she about to head off to New York to begin a concert tour when her mother Janice (Joanna Scanlon) takes her own life.

As far as Matilda is concerned, there were no hints that her mum was suicidal. To make sense of the tragedy, she goes through a box that was on Janice's bed, and finds it contains items relating to Carys Howell, a young girl who went missing from a small Welsh village more than 20 years ago.

In a bid to discover if there's a link between her mother's death and the toddler's disappearance, Matilda and her loyal accompanist Hal (Joel Fry) set off for Penllynth.

Lydia can understand why Matilda needs to get to the bottom of Janice's suicide. "That's the key relationship in the whole drama. Like a lot of single-parent families, they're friends, as well as a mother and a daughter. Matilda is filled with grief about Janice's suicide."

"She is now at a crossroads in her

life. She can either fall apart or she could channel her sadness into an obsessive search for her true identity. That's a much more bearable way of dealing with her grief."

However, it seems Matilda may not be only one grieving as she arrives in Penllynth on the day that the funeral of Ewan Dean, a wealthy local landowner who died in mysterious circumstances, is being held.

Ewan's Australian nephew Nick (James Frecheville), who has inherited the estate, invites the musicians to stay at Dean House, which Matilda recognises from a photo in a mother's box. But could there be another reason why the property seems so familiar - and increasingly sinister?

Lydia suspects viewers will want to keep tuning into Requiem, which will be shown internationally by Netflix, to find out. "I hope audiences will fall in love with this world and want to keep coming back to it. I hope they will feel like we did when we made it - intrigued by this strange thing that doesn't look like anything else."



Lydia Wilson stars in Requiem, Friday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Winterwatch 2018

BBC2, 9pm

The team returns to the National Trust's Sherborne Park Estate in the heart of the Cotswold countryside, and although this is the third consecutive season they have spent here, the familiar surroundings still hold many surprises. Michaela Strachan and Chris Packham are based at the cosy barn on the estate, bringing updates from the remote cameras rigged throughout Gloucestershire, and Martin Hughes-Games continues his investigations into some of the harder-to-find animal characters, including trout, lesser horseshoe bats, red kites and skylarks. Meanwhile, Gillian Burke is on the road once more, coming live from the island of Islay just off the west coast of Scotland. This is a special place in the winter - it's unique position in relation to the jetstream makes it a haven for all kinds of wildlife, including otters and golden eagles.

TUESDAY

Can You Rebuild My Brain?

Channel 4, 10pm

When Lotje Soderstrand was 34, her brain was permanently damaged by a stroke that almost killed her. It fundamentally changed her and

how she saw the world but it also left her fascinated with the science that saved her life. Cameras follow Lotje as meets neuroscience pioneers - scientists who are using the latest knowledge to repair 'broken' brains and developing ground-breaking treatments for everything from Parkinson's and Alzheimer's to autism. Lotje examines the risks as well as the rewards associated with fixing something experts don't yet fully understand.

WEDNESDAY

The Truth About Getting Fit

BBC1, 8pm

Michael Mosley and a team of scientists investigate the some of the easiest and most effective ways to get the biggest benefits of exercise. In Sheffield, the team test whether walking 10,000 steps a day is more effective than doing short 10 minute brisk walks, and in London, Michael installs a bike in an office to test whether workers can get fit by doing just two minutes of intense exercise a week. Elsewhere in the programme, Michael also joins strength

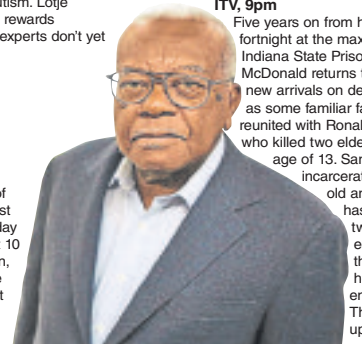
experts in Glasgow to do a 6 week experiment, comparing the effects of heavy and light weights for building muscle.

THURSDAY

Death Row 2018 with Trevor McDonald

ITV, 9pm

Five years on from his harrowing fortnight at the maximum-security Indiana State Prison, Sir Trevor McDonald returns to meet the new arrivals on death row as well as some familiar faces. He is reunited with Ronald Sanford, who killed two elderly women at the age of 13. Sanford was incarcerated at 15 years old and although he has spent the last two decades educating himself, the reality is that he will most likely end his life here. The prisoner opens up about the disturbing childhood that,



Death Row 2018 with Trevor McDonald, Thursday, ITV, 9pm

he claims, made him able to commit such heinous acts. However, another inmate, the remorseless William Clyde Gibson, from South Indiana, who was sentenced to death in June 2014 for killing and mutilating three women, disagrees. 'Everybody thinks when you do the type of stuff I did, people automatically think it's because you had a bad childhood,' he says. 'I had a perfectly normal childhood.'

FRIDAY

Nigel Slater's Middle East

BBC2, 9pm

Some countries seem to attract more celebrity chefs on culinary adventures than other - Italy has definitely played host to more than its fair share of TV cooks. But in this new series, Nigel Slater is going off the beaten track as he tours the Middle East, which is home to some of the oldest and grandest cuisines in the world. His journey begins in the Lebanon, where he learns how the country's dishes are influenced by its position on the Mediterranean. As he travels from Beirut to the Beqaa Valley, close to the Syrian border, eating with local families and home cooks, he learns more about the people's resilience in the face of decades of war, and how that is reflected in their pride in their culture and cuisine.

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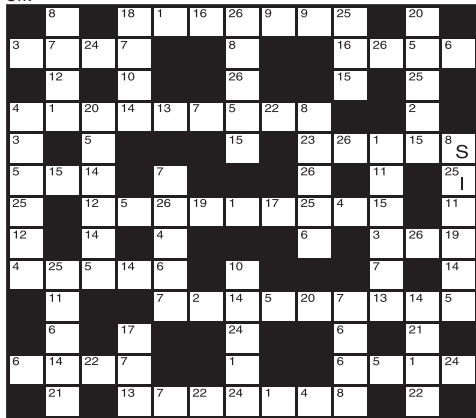
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BRAIN GYM

No.464

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
C	M	G	R	Y	Q	V	O	K	S	J	A	I
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
P	T	X	E	N	Z	F	U	L	H	W	D	B

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

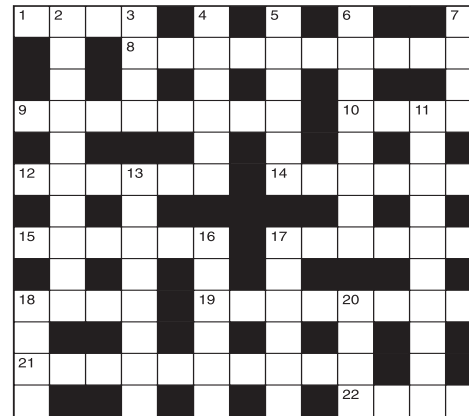
Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Creatures put in a trap, escaped (4)
8. Official note in which half the comments can't be matched (10)
9. Is apprehensive about the plumage (8)
10. A number of letters for a job (4)
12. The light touch of an oarsman (6)
14. Trim the Christmas tree (6)
15. The medicine-man hides the pictures (6)
17. Valuing scrap metal inside (6)
18. Insect with reversed barb (4)
19. It's cheap to supply a literary pot-pourri (8)
21. Set and convert into a cotton field (10)
22. After this the board will make a piece of furniture (4)

Down

2. Footman needs a trip for a change (10)
3. A little science to upset the Caledonian (4)
4. Current measure makes mother return to father in Paris! (6)
5. Maledictions producing sure confusion in the Civil Service (6)
6. To cause depression I'd upset the alcohol (8)
7. The others don't work (4)
11. It will take only a minute to go all round this kind of shop (6-4)
13. Never too disturbed to produce a harmonic (8)
16. Seem to be an equal, we hear (6)
17. Rough woodwork for the yokel (6)
18. Substitutes stop in front of these (4)
20. Places providing refreshment in opposite directions (4)



Quick Clues:

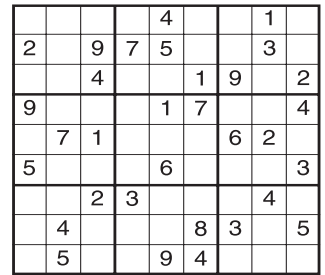
Across

1. Pitch (4)
8. Volcanic tremor (10)
9. Sham (8)
10. Yawn (4)
12. Set fire to (6)
14. Golf club (6)
15. Cherish (6)
17. Beer-maker (6)
18. Russian ruler (4)
19. Contemplate (8)
21. Frustrate (10)
22. So be it (4)

Down

2. Scandalous (10)
3. Despatched (4)
4. Fruit (6)
5. Protect (6)
6. Bog (8)
7. Measure (4)
11. Priority (10)
13. Gap (8)
16. Formula (6)
17. Brigand (6)
18. Neat (4)
20. Jot (4)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

3	1	2	7	8	6	4	5	9
8	4	6	9	3	5	1	7	2
7	9	5	2	4	1	3	8	6
4	3	1	6	7	8	9	2	5
6	8	9	3	5	2	7	1	4
2	5	7	4	1	9	6	3	8
5	2	3	1	9	4	8	6	7
1	6	4	8	2	7	5	9	3
9	7	8	5	6	3	2	4	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Omega; 8 Outcast; 9 Bring to; 10 An end; 12 Essentials; 15 At half-mast; 18 Keats; 19 Tellers; 21 Fortune; 22 Serve. Down: 1 Double talk; 2 Remit; 3 Gang; 4 Morose; 5 Atlantis; 6 Cameras; 11 Distressed; 13 Sells out; 14 Theatre; 16 Matter; 17 Heart; 20 Lose. QUICK - Across: 7 Barge; 8 Observe; 9 Exploit; 10 Alter; 12 Disrespect; 15 Omniscent; 18 Still; 19 Fervour; 21 Cleaner; 22 Round. Down: 1 Obsequious; 2 Erupt; 3 Zero; 4 Porter; 5 Assassin; 6 Written; 11 Retrograde; 13 Insolent; 14 Infidel; 16 Inform; 17 Vogue; 20 Rare.

Quiz

1. What is the name of the sequel to Milton's Paradise Lost?
2. Which avant-garde New York rock group featured Lou Reed and John Cale?
3. Whose vice-president was Richard Nixon?
4. Of which group of islands is Espiritu Santo the largest?
5. What position would we call that of the Taoiseach?
6. Which British tennis player won the 1994 Korean Open?
7. By what name do we know the spider Latrodectus mactans?
8. Who is the current UK Poet Laureate?
9. Which former Bishop of London has become a Roman Catholic priest?
10. In which African country is Abuja?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Old Vic; 2 Karl Marx; 3 John Dos Passos; 4 Dorchester; 5 JRR Tolkien; 6 Nereids or nereides; 7 Honey-bee poison; 8 Pontius Pilate; 9 Textured vegetable protein; 10 1975.

Niner: FILAMENTS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

967178
531168
4629

gives a fuel,
gives a type of fuel,
gives a power.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Allo, allo! Finer taste of France

STOURBRIDGE High Street can be a pleasant place to wander around on any given day.

On a Friday, it's particularly lively, with plenty of independent shops, restaurants and bars offering the perfect place to take the weight off, meet up with friends and family – or even to start the Friday night fun a bit early.

One place that really stands out is the French Connection Bistro, and I was lucky enough to try the place out with my wife, Kelly, while enjoying my birthday. We don't tend to venture into Stourbridge that often and it's even more rare we get to spend the afternoon together while our three-year-old daughter, Annabelle, is at nursery.

But the opportunity of enjoying some lovely French food was too good to miss – so the cinema idea was binned in favour for some top grub and fine wine.

RUSTIC

Pretty much everyone has tried French cuisine at some point in their lives, but I was a French restaurant virgin. One thing I can say, however, is entering French Connection is like being teleported from the hustle, bustle of a busy Black Country town, into a rustic, homely and cosy restaurant sat in the middle of a village in France.

I had visions of how it might look and it was exactly what I'd hoped for – quiet, quaint, well laid out, plenty of space and the right amount of privacy. There was also some nice French background music too.

Each meal is individually prepared using ingredients that have usually been freshly delivered each day. The chef has more than 22 years experience and all the food is served straight from the pan to your plate.

The menu, as you'd expect, was wide ranging. Some

Tasty – tuck in at The French Connection



Plenty of choice in selection of starters



of it was very reasonable while other options were pretty pricey, which is what you'd expect when ordering something like lobster.

There was also a lunchtime menu too, which changes according to the season and the availability of ingredients. Any food intolerance or allergy issues can also be catered for if staff are informed before placing an order. As it was a lunchtime meal and we didn't fancy anything too heavy, we opted for the three courses for £14.95 – served noon to 2.30pm – which was a very reasonable for what we got.

An example of the food on offer included homemade vegetable soup with French bread and butter, French coarse pork pate served with toasted baguette and salad garnish, mushroom ravioli with mushroom sauce and Parmesan, and smoked salmon mousse with prawn salad (for an extra £1) – and they were just the starters.

The mains were equally as impressive and included the likes of salmon fillet with coarse grain mustard sauce served with poached egg and crushed potatoes, beef stuffed peppers, and butterbean and cheese bake in a Filo pastry dish.

There was also a 'fish of the day' option, which happened to be homemade fisherman's pie topped with potatoes and served vegetables.

The desserts, like the starters and mains, change regularly so what you get can be a bit of a lottery. But if ours were anything to go by, it's a lottery you cannot lose.

We shared a bottle of Riviera which, without pretending to be connoisseurs, was possibly the nicest merlot we had ever tasted. It was a great start to a birthday weekend.

JAMES FISHER

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from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

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- ✓ Free time in London on Saturday

2 Days
by Coach **only £99**



The Houses of Parliament

Departing Saturday 24 Mar

from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ 1 night DBB at a selected hotel, Heathrow area
- ✓ Admission to the Palace of Westminster on Saturday, with self-guided audio tour
- ✓ Free time in London on Sunday

2 Days
by Coach **only £139**



London

Capital Bargain Break

Departing Saturday 7 Apr

from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ 1 night DBB at a selected hotel, Heathrow area
- ✓ Free time in London

2 Days
by Coach **only £99**



Diana

Her Fashion Story

Departing Saturday 7 Apr

from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY
GUIDE TO HOME
BUYING AND
LETTING

33
Dudley Chronicle Thursday, January 25, 2018

Modern detached in popular area is well maintained

A deceptively spacious and well maintained modern detached house, 11E Vicarage Road West in Dudley, lies in a popular and established residential area between Coseley and Dudley.

Having a wide range of amenities nearby, the home is for sale through Wakeman Estate Agents at £179,950.

The gas centrally-heated, double-glazed and well-proportioned accommodation has been further enhanced by a conservatory to the rear and there is ample off-street parking to the front and a private, level attractively laid out rear garden.

In more detail the ground floor living room has a bay window with leaded panes, under-stairs storage and a modern fireplace with a living flame gas fire.

There is also an inner hallway with a cloakroom/WC, a dining kitchen with a dining area, laminate flooring and a French window. The kitchen area includes an electric oven and a gas hob with a stainless steel cooker hood over, a Bosch dishwasher and an integrated fridge/freezer and ceramic tiled flooring.

The adjacent utility area has a ceramic tiled floor, a larder unit, wall cupboard and an integrated washing machine. The conservatory has ceramic tiled flooring and a French door.

Upstairs bedroom one has windows with leaded panes overlooking the rear and an en-suite shower room with a large walk-in shower cubicle with a glazed door and plumbed-in shower, tiled walls, pedestal wash hand basin with mixer taps and a low level WC, ceramic tiled floor, a towel rail-style radiator and a window with leaded panes.

Bedroom two, which is to the front, has a window with leaded panes. Bedroom three has a similar window and also lies to the front. The bathroom has a white suite with a panelled bath, plus a window with leaded panes.

Outside there is a tarmacadamed driveway to the front providing ample off-street parking for several cars, a slabbed pathway, shrub beds, a slabbed and gated side entrance, a level rear garden, being particularly private, with brick wall to the left hand side, and having lawn and a slabbed patio area, shrub and flower beds. The rear garden is west facing, getting the afternoon and evening sunshine.

DUDLEY £179,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Wakeman Estate Agents

TEL: 01384 459999

EMAIL: Dudley@wakeman-online.com



KEY FEATURES

Modern detached house

Deceptively spacious

Well maintained

3 bedrooms

Bathroom & en-suite



Bobby Singh, Esq
MBA FCCA

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PROPERTY



Four-bedroomed detached home in a cul-de-sac

New to the property market, this impressive modern four-bedroomed detached family home in Fieldfare Road, Stourbridge, lies at the head of a cul-de-sac in a convenient location.

It is for sale through Hicks Hadley estate agents at £350,000. It is close to amenities including local schools, shopping, the Merry Hill centre and

STOURBRIDGE

£350,000

public transport services including Stourbridge Junction and Lye Railway Stations, with direct access to Birmingham city centre.

The property's accommodation

briefly comprises a lounge, a separate dining room, a fitted kitchen, a cloakroom/WC and a utility. To the first floor are four bedrooms, the master having an en-suite and a house bathroom. To the front is a driveway and a garage with lawn and to the rear is a garden with a patio and lawn beyond.

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SEDGLEY, Off Wolverhampton Road
●**SEDGLEY BESPOKE PROPERTY WITH THE WOW FACTOR WHICH RARELY COMES ON SALE!**● Exquisitely presented FAMILY home situated on own private drive. With sweeping gardens & **STUNNING** views, this property boasts: hallway, three reception rooms, handcrafted kitchen-diner, guest W/C, utility, **THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS**, two bathrooms. Double garage, driveway. **NO UPWARD CHAIN**. **EPC E SEDGLEY**



WOLVERHAMPTON, Camberley Crescent, Ettingshall Park
Attractive spacious freehold **THREE DOUBLE BEDROOM** gas centrally heated UPVC double glazed detached family home enviaibly situated in favoured 'backwater'. The property has been conscientiously maintained over the years but offers further potential comprising entrance porch, reception hall, lounge with bay, separate dining room, breakfast kitchen, three double bedrooms, bathroom, garage, sheltered garden. **EPC: TBA SEDGLEY**.



COSELEY, Greensand Drive (Off Siddons Road)
METICULOUSLY MAINTAINED - Tremendously improved, Freehold, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached within walking distance of rail station comprising: hallway, lounge, inner hallway, cloakroom, understair store, refitted 'hub of the house' 19ft dining kitchen with extensive range of high gloss cream units with many integrated appliances. **CONSERVATORY**. Principle bedroom with fitted units & shower room en suite, two further bedrooms (one with wardrobes), bathroom. Garage, garden. **EPC: TBA SEDGLEY**.

Offers in the region of **£560,000**

Offers in the region of **£226,500**

Offers in the region of **£220,000**



LOWER GORNAL, Cinder Road
REMARKABLY SPACIOUS! Fairly recently built, gas centrally heated, double glazed **FOUR DOUBLE BEDROOM** detached within walking distance of village. Stunning specification includes: hall, cloak, dining room, elegant 16'7" lounge, dining kitchen with a fine range of units. Gallery landing, four double bedrooms (bedrooms one and two with shower room en suite), bathroom. Garage, garden. **EPC: C SEDGLEY**.



DUDLEY, Shipton Close, Milking Bank
Wonderfully presented detached property situated on the popular Milking Bank estate. Occupying a wider than average corner position and having gas central heating & double glazing this family home also boasts: hall, guest W/C, living room, dining room, conservatory, dining-kitchen, **FOUR BEDROOMS** with ensuite to master, bathroom. Garage, ample parking. **NO UPWARD CHAIN**. **SEDGLEY EPC TBA**



LOWER GORNAL, Keats Drive, Straits
NO UPWARD CHAIN. COMPREHENSIVELY MODERNISED, gas centrally heated, double glazed bungalow with panoramic distant views comprising: hall, lounge, enlarged bathroom, utility room, stunning 22'4" through 'hub of the house' dining kitchen with comprehensive range of 'arts & crafts' oak style units (double French doors out to garden), two double bedrooms, garden. **EPC: D SEDGLEY**



KINGSWINFORD, Hinsford Close
A **BEAUTIFULLY RE FITTED DETACHED FAMILY HOME**, with a good size private garden **DRIVEWAY** and **GARAGE**, offering a **SPACIOUS** and **EXPENSIVELY RE APPOINTED** layout, which includes refitted WC, Large, Re fitted Kitchen with appliances, **THREE BEDROOMS** and luxury Bathroom. **EPC C**



UPPER GORNAL/SEDGLEY BORDER, Plot 3, Adj. to 23 Vale Street
Construction is now nearing completion of a gas centrally heated, double glazed **DETACHED BUNGALOW** short walk from major bus routes comprising: hall, store, lounge/dining room, kitchen (with various integrated appliances) two bedrooms, bathroom, garage, parking for 2 vehicles, garden. Plans available (by appointment) - at Sedgley Office SAP: TBA

Offers in the region of **£325,000**

Offers in the region of **£299,950**

Offers in the region of **£235,000**

New price **£219,950**

Offers in the region of **£210,000**



WOLVERHAMPTON, Camberley Crescent, Ettingshall Park
NO UPWARD CHAIN. Well presented Mucklow' style semi-detached upon the popular Ettingshall Park estate. As well as having gas central heating & double glazing this house also boasts: porch, hallway, two reception rooms, kitchen, **THREE BEDROOMS**, bathroom. Garage, garden, driveway to front with views of the **BEACON'** to rear. **EPC:TBA SEDGLEY**



COSELEY, Turls Hill Road. Hurst Hill
Fantastically situated with open country views to front and woodland to the back, this ideal starter home has so much to offer. As well as double glazing and gas central heating this **TWO BEDROOMS** property also boasts entrance porch, living room, breakfast-kitchen, utility room/ guest W/C, bathroom, rear garden and drive to front. Offered with **NO UPWARD CHAIN**. **EPC Rating D SEDGLEY**.



LOWER GORNAL, Sandstone Close
NO UPWARD CHAIN. Wonderfully presented, well maintained end of terraced home located in the sought after Lower Gornal area. As well as having open field views to rear, central heating and double glazing this **THREE BEDROOM** home boasts: living room, recently refitted kitchen-diner, stunning bathroom. Enclosed rear garden and drive for ample parking to front. **EPC: TBA SEDGLEY**



COSELEY, Clifton Street, Hurst Hill
Well presented end of terrace property set in the popular area of Hurst Hill in Coaseley. Benefiting from central heating & double glazing this good-sized family home comprises: porch, hall, refitted kitchen, lounge-diner, **THREE BEDROOMS**, shower room. Enclosed rear garden, driveway to front with garage. Viewing essential. **EPC: TBA SEDGLEY**



SEDGLEY, Round Hill
Wonderfully presented, much improved semi-detached property located in the popular area of Sedgley. As well as benefiting from gas central heating and double glazing, this stunning home also has: hall, open plan lounge diner, fitted breakfast-kitchen, **TWO BEDROOMS**, attractive shower room. Enclosed rear garden with driveway for multiple vehicles to front. Viewing essential. **EPC:TBC. SEDGLEY**

Offers in the region of **£184,950**

Offers in the region of **£174,950**

Offers in the region of **£149,950**

Offers in the region of **£144,950**

Offers in the region of **£139,950**



WOODSETTON, Marlborough Road
Well proportioned end of terraced property located on a good corner position in the popular Woodsetton. With central heating and double glazing this family home also comprises of porch, living room, breakfast-kitchen, guest W/C, **THREE BEDROOMS**, bathroom, enclosed rear garden, front and side gardens, detached garage and offered with **NO UPWARD CHAIN**. Leasehold. Sedgley. **EPC TBA**.



LOWER GORNAL, Redstone Way
REMARKABLY SPACIOUS! Gas centrally heated, double glazed First Floor "coach house" style apartment with **PANORAMIC DISTANT VIEWS** from the rear with gated entry approach comprising: hall (with internal door to integral garage), staircase up to 19 ft transverse landing, 17'1" through living/ dining room, breakfast kitchen, **TWO BEDROOMS** (one with wardrobes), bathroom. Allocated parking, communal grounds. **EPC: TBA SEDGLEY**



UPPER GORNAL, Priors Mill
NO UPWARD CHAIN. Refurbished, gas centrally heated, single glazed intermediate 'starter home' that has been redecorated throughout convenient for many amenities & appealing to first time buyers etc. comprising: hall, lounge, dining kitchen with a range of 'walnut' effect units & integrated oven and hob. Two bedrooms, bathroom. Gardens with views. **EPC: D SEDGLEY**



PENSNETT, Primrose Park
An **IMPRESSIVE END MEWS RETIREMENT BUNGALOW**, delightfully located within this sought after and secure **WARDEN CONTROLLED** gated development, including beautifully maintained gardens, offering a **VERY WELL PRESENTED** One Double Bedroom layout with an impressive **CONSERVATORY**. **EPC C**



TIPTON, Thunderbolt Way
An extremely well presented ground floor apartment located on a popular modern development in Tipton. With entrance hallway and **TWO BEDROOMS** this property also benefits from open-plan lounge-kitchen, fitted shower room, double glazing and electric heating, parking space and is offered with **NO UPWARD CHAIN**. **EPC: D SEDGLEY**

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PROPERTY



Awesome views from stunning bungalow

KINGSWINFORD
£174,950

<<<

A stunning three-bedroom bungalow in Ragees Road, Kingswinford, lies in a lovely cul-de-sac location and has awesome views.

Redecorated throughout to a high standard and having a tiered rear garden, it is for sale through loveyourpostcode.com at offers in excess of £174,950.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hall, a living room, kitchen, conservatory, three bedrooms and a bathroom, a driveway and a garden.

A spokesman for the selling agent said: "This lovely detached bungalow offers off-road parking, three bedrooms and all the views you could want."

The selling agents are expecting a lot of interest to be shown in this sale.

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 Guide: **£19,000-£24,000 (plus fees)**



1 Rosemary Avenue, Bilston
 3 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£19,000-£24,000 (plus fees)**



696 Hagley Road West, Oldbury
 3 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£99,000+ (plus fees)**



78 Green Lane, Great Barr
 3 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£60,000+ (plus fees)**



Athlone, Angela Place, Bilston
 3 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£45,000+ (plus fees)**



210 Jockey Road, Sutton Coldfield
 4 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£195,000+ (plus fees)**



95 Lime Street, Pennfields
 2 Bed Mid Terraced House
 Guide: **£59,000+ (plus fees)**



111 Apsley Road, Oldbury
 3 Bed Semi Detached House
 Guide: **£135,000+ (plus fees)**



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 Guide: **£250,000+ (plus fees)**

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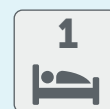
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27 DUDLEY ROAD, SEDGLEY O/A £675,000
 •Exceptional individual detached family home. Set within well tended walled gardens
 •Spacious five bedroom accommodation over three floors
 •Impressive conservatory, three reception rooms, high quality fittings throughout
 •Extensive breakfast kitchen, utility room and playroom
 •EPC RATING C



'WOODBINE COTTAGE', 73 STOURBRIDGE ROAD, HAGLEY £325,000
 •Attractive double fronted end of terrace cottage
 •Bedroom one with en-suite shower room, two further bedrooms
 •Well maintained & improved double glazed accommodation
 •Car parking to side of property with easily maintained rear garden
 •EPC RATING D



7 BOUNDARY CRESCENT, LOWER GORNAL £187,500
 •Extended & considerably improved semi detached house
 •Well maintained accommodation with three bedrooms plus attic room
 •Added benefit of a sun room, bar, utility area and sauna room
 •Rear garden with decking on two levels and swimming pool
 •EPC RATING D



11E VICARAGE ROAD WEST, WOODSETTON £179,950
 •Spacious and well maintained modern detached house
 •Three bedrooms with en suite shower room to bedroom one
 •Dining kitchen with adjacent utility area, conservatory
 •Private level rear garden & ample off road parking on driveway
 •EPC RATING C



NEW
**10 RUBENS CLOSE
UPPER GORNAL** O/A £125,000
 •Modern mid town house
 •Two bedrooms
 •Pleasant cul de sac location
 •Low maintenance rear garden
 •Excellent panoramic views to the front
 •Two car parking spaces
 •EPC RATING C



**BUILDING PLOT ADJ 54
DEEPPDALE LANE** £98,000
 •Individual building plot
 •Planning consent for a five bedroom detached dwelling
 •Planning application number P15/1679
 •Popular and established residential area
 •Excellent views to the rear



NEW
**458 HIMLEY ROAD
DUDLEY** Guide Price £100,000
 •Character Gornal Wood cottage with footpath access only to the front
 •Occupying a level garden plot with potential for extension and improvement
 •Approached from Himley Road over an unmade driveway
 •Pleasant cottage gardens
 •NO PROVISION FOR OFF ROAD PARKING
 •EPC RATING F



**NO UPWARD
CHAIN**
109 DUDLEY ROAD O/A £114,950
SEDGLEY
 •Mid terraced house
 •Three bedrooms
 •Well presented & improved
 •Enlarged kitchen & re-fitted bathroom
 •EPC RATING E

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Skoda continues its value-for-money approach

By Ian Donaldson

It's raining new SUVs in the Volkswagen Group as it rushes to tap the trend for these jacked up estates with looks that promise adventure and a life in the wild.

The latest one wears a Skoda badge on the front and the Karoq name on the boot lid and is the smaller sibling of the Kodiaq SUV launched last year.

It enters a car market where SUV sales are roaring ahead while just about everything else is suffering.

So no wonder it feels like a new VW Group-inspired SUV offering pops up on a monthly basis with a VW, SEAT, Audi or, in this case Skoda name attached.

They share important parts like engines and gearboxes and the expensive to develop platform they all sit on too, leaving it to the stylists to set them apart outside and in. Even then, it can be hard going to guess the precise make you're looking at.

Finely

Which means it's a good thing that they all share a modern, finely honed exterior feel and, inside, the VW Group's insistence on a solid, frippery-free approach wins through.

And so to the Skoda Karoq; priced from £20,875 in SE trim with a 115 horsepower 1.0 litre petrol engine, it looks conspicuously good value for a car that's spacious for people and their luggage and decently well equipped.

Stretching to 4,382mm in length and 1,841mm wide it sits in a class of SUV that takes in competitors from outside the VW Group like the Nissan Qashqai and Honda CR-V

There are four engines on offer across the range, 1.0 and 1.5 litre petrols with 115 and 150 horsepower and two diesels, 1.6 and 2.0 litres with the same outputs but better economy and pulling power – and a £3,000 price hike.

The more powerful diesel comes with a four-wheel drive system as standard, while all four engines are available with six-speed manual gearbox or seven-speed DSG automatic transmission, with prices topping out at £31,690 for the Edition 2.0 TDI DSG 4x4.

The core of the Karoq range is expected to centre around the 150 horsepower 1.5 litre petrol engine (from £22,225) with diesels still making an important contribution despite the current wave of distaste for this sort of car.

You can see why diesels will sell too,



The latest SUV wears a Skoda badge on the front and the Karoq name on the boot lid and is the smaller sibling of the Kodiaq SUV

especially for owners with big mileages to cover where the 61.4mpg official average for the 1.6 diesel compares to the 53.3mpg of the 1.0 litre petrol. Emissions favour the diesel as well, to one's surprise.

There are three trim levels: SE, SE L and Edition. Standard kit across the range includes alloy wheels, dual zone climate control and front assist that detects a pedestrian in your path and will brake if you don't.

SE L models (from £23,165) up the kit count considerably, adding bigger alloys, satellite navigation with an eight inch touchscreen, heated front seats, trip computer, rear view camera and parking sensors as highlights.

Top grade Edition models include still larger (19ins) alloys, uprated sat nav with

a larger screen, electrically operated boot, and more safety systems including traffic sign recognition and blind spot protection that warns of traffic you can't see in the door mirrors.

A fourth trim option, called SE Technology (from £20,875) is aimed at business users and includes satellite navigation, adaptive cruise control and parking sensors.

All but the SE have Skoda's Variflex rear seat system, where the three seats can be moved forward or backwards to increase boot space or rear legroom, or lifted out altogether. It means a luggage capacity of up to 588 litres with the seats in place or a van-like 1,810 litres with them removed. The SE has 521 litres available, or 1,630 with the rear seat folded flat.

Out on a mix of roads the 1.0 litre three-cylinder petrol engine impressed with an eager willingness to move this bigish car along, while riding with gentle precision.

And there was not much noise from either the engine, road surface or wind intrusion in the cabin.

It showed 38.4mpg after a 130-mile drive.

At the other end of the Karoq range, a 2.0 TDI 4x4 managed 43.4mpg and felt more rapid in the higher gears but rode less well and its bigger low profile tyres kicked up a racket on coarsely surfaced roads.

It looks as though Skoda continues to produce cars where the cheaper ones perfectly sum up the brand's fine value for money approach.

SEAT Ibiza puts in class-winning performance in UK Car awards



The all-new SEAT Ibiza added the title of Best Supermini in the UK Car of the Year Awards to its haul of accolades.

By claiming this category win, the fifth-generation of the Spanish brand's iconic model has also claimed the right to be considered for the overall Car of the Year title, which will be announced in the coming weeks.

Certainly SEAT's finest made a big impression on the awards judges, who number some of the country's top motoring journalists. After putting the Ibiza through a rigorous road-testing programme, they expressed admiration for the advances the new car had made, commenting that "one of the best superminis just got even better".

The new MQB A0 platform that underpins the new Ibiza played a significant role in its success, earning praise for delivering an "engaging chassis that really delights". As another judge put it: "In a year where the supermini class upped its game, the Ibiza feels a cut above."

Richard Harrison, SEAT UK director, said: "The new generation Ibiza marks a watershed in the car's history of achievement as our most successful model. With the benefit of our new modular platform and further advances in technology and driving character that define all of today's SEAT models, we are proud to have produced a car that can take on the best in its class and win, all at a genuine great value package for the customer."

Ignis and Vitara special editions from Suzuki for 2018



Suzuki GB has announce Special Edition models of Ignis and Vitara that are now on sale. The two new models are Ignis Adventure and Vitara Kuro which makes a return to the UK range following a very successful limited production run in 2017.

Ignis Adventure is based on the SZ-T and adds a selection of the most popular and distinctive personalisation options available. SZ-T standard specification includes rear view camera, 16-inch alloy wheels, roof rails and individually sliding rear seats and Adventure adds a further specification of rear spoiler, side mouldings, front and rear skid plates, coloured front grille centre bar, side decal set and colour keyed front fog lamp bezels.

The added value of these personalisation options is £1,900 and with Adventure priced at £13,999, it represents a premium of just £1,000 over the SZ-T. A

zero per cent APR PCP (Personal Contract Purchase) agreement is available at just £159 per month over 43 months. This requires a deposit of £2,216 and an optional final payment of £5,105 to keep the car.

A limited number of Adventure models are being produced and four colours are available which are Fervent Red (Solid paint) and Boost Blue Pearl, Pure White Pearl and Super Black Pearl as optional metallic colours at £465.

The Vitara Kuro makes a return to the range through customer demand and a further 1,000 units are now being produced. Based again on the 1.6-litre SZ-T 2WD manual transmission model with auto air conditioning, satellite navigation, Smartphone link audio and rear privacy glass as standard equipment, Kuro offers a unique specification and £1,700 added customer value for a premium of just £750 over the SZ-T.

Kuro offers a very high and unique specification including 'Misti' satin black alloy wheels, Black front bumper and side body moulding set, Black door mirrors, black rear upper spoiler, black front grille and side trims and Kanji 'Kuro' badge. For the interior, the colour design theme continues with Piano Black to dashboard, ventilation trim ring set and centre console trim. A carbon effect centre analogue clock is also included as standard.

Kuro is available in four colours which are Superior White as a solid colour and Cosmic Black, Galactic Grey and Silky Silver as optional metallic colours available at £500.

Vitara Kuro is also available with zero per cent PCP at a monthly rate of £199, payable over 43 months, if an initial deposit of £3,390 is made with a £7,001 final optional payment required to keep the car at the end of the term.



You can make hundreds if not thousands of pounds

Renting out your driveway can ease festive hangover

Brits still counting the financial cost of Christmas could be making hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds a year from an often-overlooked asset – their driveway!

The timely advice from YourParkingSpace.co.uk means that households counting the cost of the festive season could start making money for next Christmas, as proven by recent statistics showing more than 15,000 customers made over £500 each in 2017 from their empty driveway.

Harrison Woods, managing director at YourParkingSpace.co.uk, said: "The festivities are quickly followed by a nasty bump for many UK households as the reality of paying for Christmas has to be faced with the arrival of the dreaded credit card bills.

"However, there's a significant money-making opportunity for countless households quite literally beneath their feet. More and more people are renting out their driveway to motorists looking for somewhere to park, which can help them save for the future and makes Christmas, for instance, less of a financial headache."

Other evidence reveals that driveways on YourParkingSpace.co.uk made owners £12 million in 2017, while homeowners in almost 30 towns and cities in the UK made an average of more than £1,000 each.

Meanwhile, recent reports suggest that some essentials, such as many ingredients for Christmas dinner, were more expensive than ever in 2017, making financial planning for Christmas 2018 even more prudent.

Harrison added: "The sooner you list a driveway on YourParkingSpace.co.uk then the quicker the opportunity to make some money. We have over 15,000 customers making more than £500 a year each, proving driveways really can be a financial lifeline for those savvy enough to take advantage."

Driveways in particular demand include those near city centres, railway stations, airports, music and sporting venues, shopping centres and popular local amenities. For more information visit www.yourparkingspace.co.uk

London Motor Show gearing up for May

The Confused.com London Motor Show will bring the very best of the automotive world to the capital.

After outgrowing Battersea Evolution – where a record-breaking 25,000 spectators passed through the gates in 2017 – the Confused.com London Motor Show was forced to relocate to the iconic ExCeL.

As such, the "automotive event of the year" promises to be bigger and better than ever, with 2.5 times the amount of internal space allowing for more cars, more exhibitors and more activities than ever before.

From May 17 to 20, the ExCeL will be home to hard-hitting content for an all-encompassing day out, including interactive games zones, simulators, celebrities, industry guest speakers and – as always – the latest cars on the road available to buy at great show offers.

Plus, an all-new feature dubbed 'The Best of British' will see an entire area devoted to British engineering and manufacturing – showcasing the cars built or assembled on these shores.

Tickets start at £10.50 and one child (under 17) goes free with a paying adult. They're on sale now at londonmotorshow.seetickets.com. For every full price ticket sold at show, £1 will be donated up to the value of £25,000 to help charity partner Ben support colleagues in the automotive industry who are struggling with life's challenges.

Ford unveils its new Edge SUV and fastest ever SUV

By Becca Chaplin

Ford has debuted the new Edge SUV and announced its ST counterpart at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

The Edge will be the first of the firm's SUVs to be tuned by Ford Performance and be gifted the ST nameplate. It's treated to a 2.7-litre twin-turbocharged V6 engine, capable of producing 350bhp and 515Nm of torque.

The V6 powertrain is mated to an eight-speed automatic gearbox. It's equipped as standard with four-wheel drive but is available with an optional performance brakes package and ST sports suspension.

Unfortunately, the UK market won't get this full-fat version. Instead, an ST-Line edition will be added to the Edge range with some performance elements. What this will include is yet to be announced.

While those on this side of the Atlantic might be disappointed to be missing out, the anticipation of the updated version of the Edge reaching our shores should be more than enough to keep Brits excited.

It's been given a fresh look with clean, sleek lines, but more important is a selection of driver assistance firsts for Ford. These include post-collision braking, evasive steering and adaptive steering with stop-and-go lane centring.

Ford announced that every model will also include forward collision warnings, dynamic braking support, pre-collision assistance with pedestrian detection, cross-traffic alerts, and lane-keeping technology.

All of these driver aids make the Edge a particularly appealing offer for families.

Again, we won't get the version seen today as the petrol V6 engine isn't one we get over here. Currently in the UK the Ford Edge is available with a 2.0-litre diesel engine, with a power output of either 177bhp or 207bhp.

There are no dates for when this will be unveiled for the European market.

However, with the new Ford EcoSport announced at the end of last year and about to be launched in the UK, we predict it will follow in the next few months.



The Edge will be the first of the firm's SUVs to be tuned by Ford Performance



A raft of driver aids make the Edge particularly appealing for families

Car of mum and dad – free taxis!

Ferrying family from one social engagement to another may be part of the job description, but it seems for some parents, it's almost a full-time occupation. New research has found the average parent spends 286 hours a year driving their kids around – almost two months' working days. If their journeys were on meter, that would earn them a whopping £9.8k a year.

The survey, which polled 2,000 parents for Vauxhall Motors, found that parents could take a road trip to sunny Lisbon for the equivalent of the 1,283 annual miles that they drive their kids on average. But it's not just heading from A to B; parents spend an average of two working days a year simply waiting for their children in cars.

And not all trips are to the tune of "are we there yet?"; half (49%) of parents use journeys to have a laugh with their kids and more than two fifths (44%) say they enjoy the bonding time it offers. Almost a third (31%) admit that the moments spent in a car with their kids affords them quality time they wouldn't get elsewhere. But it seems that both parties get fuelled up over the music choices with a quarter (25%) claiming the selection of tunes is the top

in-car discussion. The research revealed that car journeys are also a great way for parents to find out more about their kids. For both children and parents alike, playground chat is the top thing to natter about with almost half (48%) discussing the latest gossip at school, sixth form or college. A fifth (22%) of parents use car journeys as an opportunity to eavesdrop on their kids' 'private' chats and one in six (17%) say it's a good opportunity to quiz kids about their love life, with nowhere for them to run!

TV presenter and Dad of two, Jeff Brazier comments: "I definitely do my fair share of ferrying the kids around, but it's fascinating to see how many hours of your life it actually takes up. It might seem like a chore at time, but it's true that those journeys are precious moments of quality time that you'll never get back."

Denis Chick, director of communications at Vauxhall Motors, added: "As a father of three, I've spent countless hours behind the wheel at the mercy of my children. At Vauxhall, we celebrate the small moments that make life brilliant. And family bonding time during a car trip epitomises just that."

The results show that while parenting really is a full-time job, the Cab of Mum and



Some parents spend 286 hours a year driving their children around

Dad is an important bonding experience between parents and their kids – and it's these moments that create priceless memories to make it all worthwhile.

The research supports the launch of Vauxhall Motors' newest player in the SUV

car park, the Grandland X. The Grandland X is the largest SUV in Vauxhall's range with seating for five people, generous luggage space and a raft of technology, including WiFi for up to seven devices. It's priced from £22,310 on-the-road.

Honda announces pricing and grades for all-new Jazz

By James Parker

Honda has revealed the pricing and grades for the 2018 new-look Honda Jazz, following its successful unveil at the Frankfurt Motor Show last year.

Priced at £14,115 for the entry level S grade, the range tops out at £17,155 for the new Sport edition, which features the new 130 PS (96 kW) 1.5-litre i-VTEC engine.

With customer deliveries expected to start from February, the new line-up will also include Skyride Blue Metallic as a new colour option.

PCP pricing has also been confirmed for new Jazz line up with the Sport available for £199 a month on a 5.9% APR three year agreement.

The 102PS 1.3 i-VTEC engine range will start off at £14,115 on-the-road for the entry-level S model. Specifications are generous across the range, with base-grade S models fitted as standard with convenience features such as air conditioning, cruise control with speed limiter and dusk sensing auto lights.

The mid-grade SE model, priced from £15,615 on-the-road, adds front and rear parking sensors, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors and 15" alloy wheels.

Those opting for the top-grade EX model (from



Styling is enhanced with 16-inch alloy wheels

£17,115) will appreciate smart entry and start, automatic climate control and reversing camera. Styling is enhanced with 16-inch alloy wheels and front fog lamps, while LED headlights are now standard addition on the EX.

Brand new to the line-up is the Jazz Sport which features a 130PS (96 kW) 1.5-litre i-VTEC petrol engine. Based on the SE grade the Sport features; a thinner front splitter beneath the lower grille, and triple-strake diffuser to the rear bumper – both finished with a sporty red accent line similar to the Civic Type R, LED headlights, front fog lamps, side sill skirts, a tailgate spoiler and gloss-black 16" alloy wheels. The interior features a unique pinstripe pattern on the upholstery and a leather-wrapped steering wheel and gear knob, all of which are enhanced by orange stitching.

The new 1.5-litre sport is available to pre order now, with first customer deliveries scheduled to land in dealer forecourts for February 2018.

Phil Webb, head of car at Honda UK, commented: "The Jazz is our best-selling car in the UK and has been rejuvenated with the new Sport model, as well as the new interior and exterior styling. The Jazz is a very important model for us, with an extremely loyal following, so we look forward to seeing this success continue with the new line up and the addition of the Sport model."



Front fog lamps, LED headlights are now standard on the EX

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Probably best car Vauxhall makes

By Ian Donaldson

Vauxhall can't have heard about the demise of diesel; the new range topping Insignia Country Tourer comes with nothing else.

In fact, there isn't even a choice of engine until a second one arrives in a few weeks. And that's a diesel too.

Of course, Vauxhall knows diesels are going to be around for years and the overhyped stories that diesel is in its death throws are simply nonsense.

Which is just as well if you enjoy your driving, for the newcomer is probably the best car Vauxhall currently makes.

Ability

For a £1,355 premium over the normal Sport Tourer, you gain four-wheel drive in the most expensive version, while all of them have a gently raised ride height (+20mm) and the macho black plastic cladding and silver skid plates that these days signifies a car with the ability to handle a slippery forest track.

The result is a big car, more than five metres long, that socks it to the likes of Audi's Allroad and the VW Passat Alltrack but for thousands less, starting the three-car range at £25,635.

All of them share a 168bhp 2.0-litre turbo diesel engine and the ability to touch 135mph and hit 62mph in around nine seconds while managing better than 43mpg in the official test. A 210 horsepower diesel arrives shortly and automatic gears are already an option in a Country Tourer in front-drive form. Order the 4x4 (£27,235) and you'll have a car that is mostly front wheel drive most of the time but can switch power to the back wheels in an instant when slip is detected.

Beneath the new body cladding sits a car



Standard kit includes a fine satellite navigation system



This car has plenty of space for passengers in the rear

with enough space in the rear seat to act as a stand-in limo and a boot that varies from generous (560 litres) with the seat back upright to vast (1,665 litres) with it folded down.

Lack of room will never be a problem here. Nor will the fittings and fixtures that come with a car Vauxhall perches at the pinnacle of the Insignia range.

As befits the poshest model there are a

host of standard features, from a tailgate that opens with a well aimed kicking motion under the rear bumper to roof rails that can cope with loads up to 100kg.

You and your passengers should never feel a wintry chill in this car, with heated front seats as standard and outer rear seats as an option along with the option of a heated steering wheel for the driver and a heated windscreen to quickly banish early morning frost.



This version of the Insignia goes well beyond its specification and turns into an enjoyable ride

Standard kit also includes a fine satellite navigation, cruise control, leather faced seats, 19ins alloy wheels, panoramic camera and Vauxhall's OnStar system that gives you a wi-fi hotspot in the car and automatic crash response if the worst happens.

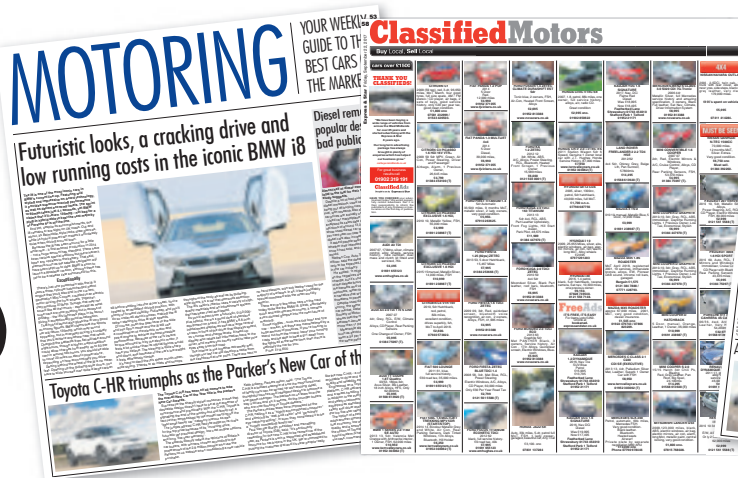
But this version of the Insignia goes well beyond its specification and turns into an enjoyable drive as soon as you head off down the road, a potent and easy-going

diesel engine mating with a precise manual gearchange to provide a car with genuine punch.

On a properly surfaced road, even in pouring rain, you're unlikely ever to trigger the 4x4 system into instant action. But come a winter chill or a muddy lane in deepest February and you might be very glad that your Country Tourer will take care of things for you.

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9 Local Information

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Colour/Features - By no later than 10 clear days before the date of publication. To cancel Lineage, Semi Display and Classified Display advertisements please telephone 01902 317878. To cancel Colour/Features advertisements please speak to the Representative through whom the advertisement was booked.

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Title bouts added to Gavin fight bill

TWO IBO continental titles will be on the line on the undercard of Frankie Gavin's IBO welterweight world title shot in his home city next month.

Top of the BCB Promotions bill on February 23 at Birmingham's Genting Arena is Gavin against Bethuel Ushona for the IBO Welterweight crown.

Redditch's Andrew Robinson, a former WBO European and British title challenger, takes on Birmingham's Craig Cunningham for the vacant middleweight crown. Meanwhile, former Midlands champion Craig Morris of Ludlow will make the first defence of his strap against Leek's Andy Keates.

Undefeated Wolverhampton bantamweight Kyle Williams challenges Jordan Turner for the Midlands area title.

The undercard also features Birmingham's Matt Sen against Wolverhampton's Joshua Burke at cruiserweight, Tipton light heavyweight Ricky Summers, Birmingham super bantamweight Sean Davis, Birmingham super welterweight Mussab Abubaker, West Bromwich light heavyweight Tom Stokes and Coventry's Dilly Singh.

Laura goes for Muir indoor track success

DOUBLE European Indoor champion and five-time British record holder Laura Muir will compete in the 3000m at the SPAR British Athletics Indoor Championships in Birmingham next month.

Muir, aged 24, will look to claim her first British title over the distance on February 17, having already clinched two titles at 1500m and one at 800m. She will also be looking to secure her spot on the British team for March's IAAF World Indoor Championships at the same Arena Birmingham venue.

Fellow Scots Eilish McColgan and Steph Twell have also accepted their invitations for the event. British Athletics' Major Event Director Cherry Alexander said: "We're delighted to be hosting the SPAR British Athletics Indoor Championships and world trials in Birmingham. With two places up for grabs per event on the British team ahead of the World Indoor Championships competition will be fierce."

The championships are on February 17 and 18 with tickets on sale at www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 3388222.

School lauded for its commitment to sport

A SCHOOL has been praised for its commitment to physical activity with a Youth Sport Trust Silver Quality Mark.

The Quality Mark, awarded to Ormiston Forge Academy Cradley Heath, is an online self-review tool which provides schools with a nationally recognised badge of excellence for the quality of its PE and school sport.

Dawn Benson, leader of the performance faculty, said: "We are absolutely thrilled to have been awarded the Silver Quality Mark from the Youth Sport Trust, which recognises our commitment to delivering the best possible sporting experiences for the young people at our school."

The Youth Sport Trust is a national charity that builds a brighter future for young people through the power of sport. Youth Sports Trust chief executive Alison Oliver said: "Congratulations to Ormiston Forge Academy for achieving the Youth Sport Trust Silver Quality Mark."

Students represent the academy in a number of sports and are also representing Sandwell at the Black Country Championships in badminton.



Youngsters at Ace Academy enjoy the coaching sessions



Sessions are run at venues across Walsall

Former Saddler nurtures Ace new football talent

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"We now have lots of different age categories and that really helps the players develop."

A FOOTBALL academy launched by ex-Walsall midfielder Wayne Thomas is inviting youngsters to lace up their boots to kick off the new year.

Ace Academy runs coaching sessions for youngsters aged between two-and-a-half and 11 at various locations across Walsall.

Launched two years ago, 120 young footballers currently attend each week and enjoy taking part in technical training sessions as well as playing games.

Children between the ages of two-and-a-half and four can receive a social introduction to football by joining Mini-Aces.

Invited

Youngsters aged from five to seven are invited to play with the Little Aces while juniors aged seven plus can team up with the Ace Academy.

Alongside the coaching sessions, Ace Academy also runs futsal groups for children aged between seven and 14 while next season they expect to have seven teams playing grassroots football in the Walsall Junior Youth League.

And Thomas, aged 39, he is delighted with how the academy is progressing.

"I launched Ace Academy back in 2016 to try and bridge the gap between grassroots football and academy football," said the former Saddler, who played 18 games for the club over a four-year period. "Since



Midfielder Wayne Thomas as a Walsall player

then it's grown a lot quicker than I expected and we now run nine different sessions each week for children of all different ages.

"The aim is to try and cater for everyone," Thomas added. "Children aged from two-and-a-half can join the Mini-Aces which is full of fun games and gives them an introduction into football. But it's more a social thing for them."

"The majority of our kids enrol on an Ace Academy experience course which sees them attend a training session once a week. They then play games against professional academies."

"We have just agreed that former Walsall midfielder Martin O'Connor, who is a UEFA A Licence coach, will help head that up in the new year. And next sea-

son we also plan to extend our grassroots arm. We currently have an under-7s team. But we have plans to have seven teams of different age groups competing in the Walsall Junior Youth League.

"Ace actually stands for attitude, confidence and enjoyment. And that's what it's all about, to give these children a chance to enjoy their football and have fun."

Thomas, who also works as commercial manager at his former club Walsall, revealed he decided to start the academy after his eldest two sons were released from professional clubs.

"I've got four boys and one of them was released aged 12 and the other was released aged eight," he added. "I felt there was a lack of quality coaching in the area and I wanted to do something about bridging that gap between grassroots football and academy football."

Pressure

"Academy football at professional football clubs isn't for everyone. It can come with a lot of pressure, both for the players themselves and for their families."

"And sometimes it might be better for a young footballer to join an academy when they are a little bit older, rather when they are seven or eight years old."

"Since we started in 2016, we have had five lads leave Ace to join academies at professional clubs. But we have also had a lot of lads turn those clubs down because they are enjoying developing with us."

"I coach four evenings a week and absolutely love it, as do all the coaches," he added. "We now have lots of different age categories and that really helps the players develop."

"If we have got a three-and-a-half-year-old who technically or physically is developing faster than his peers, we can then put him with the under-fives."

"And it's the same if we have an older player, say a six-year-old, who is a bit shy."

"He can play with the under-fives to help build his confidence. The important thing is they all enjoy it and and all succeed and thankfully we have got the environment to ensure they can."

For more information on Ace Academy visit <https://www.facebook.com/footballaceacademy/>



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On oche for darts FA Cup qualifiers

RILEYS Wolverhampton will stage the first of two events this weekend offering places at the PDC's 'FA Cup of darts'.

Pub chain Rileys Sports Bars are again working alongside the PDC to produce 32 'wildcards' to join the latter's professionals at the UK Open in Minehead, broadcast on ITV4 from March 2-4.

Four will prevail from two tournaments at Rileys Wolverhampton, on Broad Street, with two to be generated from the first competition on Saturday.

Entrants will be whittled down to four semi-finalists, with the two winners taking the UK Open places. The second event is on Sunday February 18.

Anybody aged 16 or over (on January 1) can compete in the qualifiers, but cannot enter on the day. The online cut-off is 48 hours before the event at www.rileys.co.uk/tournaments.

Applications can be made in person at Rileys until 5pm the previous day. Call 01902 310521. Entry is £7. Dress code is strictly trousers, shoes and either a shirt or polo shirt. Those whose played in last weekend's PDC's Qualifying School, or PDPA members, cannot enter.

Doors open at 10am and players must sign in by midday, ahead of the 12.30pm draw. They will toe the oche by 1.30pm.

Operating under the 501 format, ties are first to four legs until a best-of-nine semi-final.

The rest of the 128-field will be made up of the top 96 from the UK Open Order of Merit, played between the PDC pro at the organisation's own UK Open qualifiers.

Runner Holdcroft cock-a-hoop at half marathon position

WITH very little on the calendar at the weekend and with the weather turning unpleasant the opportunities for athletes from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club were few.

But unpleasant weather and having to travel never puts off the club's genuine racers. Having said that only one member pulled on the hoops to race but he did have to travel some distance and to another country, albeit Wales, to do so.

Steve Holdcroft took part in the Trail Marathon Wales, a half marathon over the fire tracks and trails of the Ceod Y Brenin forest near Dolgellau.

On the back of a high placing in the recent Second Division fixture in the Birmingham Cross Country League a week ago he was looking to underline that performance with a good race over a testing, undulating course in unforgiving countryside. And it was well worth the journey as Holdcroft came home in a very impressive fourth place, winning his age group and covering the 13.1 mile distance in 1.35.05. An extraordinary time in view of the climbs involved and conditions on the day.

School leads way with sporting success

THE new year has kicked off with rewards for sporting prowess at Stourbridge school Old Swinford Hospital.

Year 13 student Charles Hilliard has been invited to compete in the 200m at the British Indoor Athletics Championships next month. The best of British athletes will compete for a place on the national team ahead of the IAAF World Indoor Championships in March.

Hilliard will also compete in the 60m at the Midland Indoor Championships (u-20) and the 400m at English Age Group Championships (u-20) in Sheffield. A member of Halesowen Athletics Club, the 18-year-old has proved his ability many times over the years and is one of OSH's star



Adam Finch



Charles Hilliard



Huw Taylor

athletes. At last year's sports day he broke one of the school's longest standing records in the senior 200m, in a time of 22.166s.

Cricketer Adam Finch is currently representing England in the under-19 Cricket World Cup in New Zealand. He took 2-10 in victory over Canada, their third Group C win. Adam, aged 17, and from Kingswinford, plays for Worcestershire CC 2nd XI and Himley CC.

On the rugby pitch, former OSH 1st XV captain and Worcester Warriors forward Huw Taylor will join the Dragons next summer on a two-year deal. Huw can play in the second row and back row and impressed the Newport side with consistent performances for Worcester Warriors. The 21-year-old has national honours having played for England at u-17s, u-18s and u-20s level. He is also eligible to play for Wales.

TITLE BOOST FOR LEADERS

Burton 12 DK 14
LEAGUE leaders DK came out on top to steal a march on their rivals in the title race.

With the sides beginning on level points, but Burton with a game in hand, it was a vital game for both sides. And it didn't disappoint.

The travelling contingent must have wondered if it would be on with snow showers all the way up. The pitch was muddy but playable and the first few minutes were about who could keep the slippery ball in hand.

Burton knocked on and tried to gather, forcing a penalty which Sam Vaughan just missed after two minutes, but was spot-on with another attempt two minutes later.

Combine

Burton's first attack saw the Brooks brothers, Lewis and Jack, combine to send full back Will Simpson in for a try out wide but he missed his own conversion. On other occasions, the powerful Burton pack were checked by strong DK tackling.

After a period of pressure by Burton, DK asserted themselves on 18 minutes with a fine try out wide by Nick Adams. Vaughan, who has kicked more than 30 conversions this season, was again accurate with a penalty to extend DK's lead. Burton responded with a converted try after 39 minutes to lead 12-11 at the break.

After a change of shirts at half-time, it became a war of attrition as Burton emptied their replacement bench whilst DK were forced into three changes as the hits took a toll. On came Kieron Williams, Callum Nicholls and James Fildes and DK hung on. A penalty for offside at the ruck gave Vaughan his third penalty kick on 71 minutes and DK had the game won.

Next up is Camp Hill at home on Saturday.



Dudley Kingswinford's Jordan Brookes is tackled near the goal line

Competitive season looks on the cards

WEEK 2 of the WCB Indoor Cricket League North division brought together the four new clubs in the Kinver league; all making promising starts to suggest a competitive season ahead.

In the first match, Chaddesley Corbett (104-3) beat Quatt (103-5) in the final over.

Quatt got off to a flying

start but after opener Wheldon retired on 26 the run rate dropped. Alex Biddle was run out on 21 but returned to the crease to end on 40 not out.

In reply, Chaddesley started positively but after losing two wickets a collapse looked on the cards. But Shan batted well and Quatt conceded 29 wides.

Match two saw Stourbridge

(109-4) beat Coombs Wood (92-3) by 18 runs. Steve Ludlam made 25 for Stourbridge and J Nazir 21. For Coombs Wood, Dan Jones raced to 25 and when opener A Saeed retired the scoring dropped.

M Patel took 3-11 and even the return of Jones, to end on 30no, was unable to stem the tide.

Young guns check in with the Heathens

TWO talented teenagers have been snapped up Cradley Heathens to ride in their National Trophy campaign.

Jason Edwards and Drew Kemp, both aged 15, join big-hitter Adam Roynon as confirmed starters.

Despite preparing for his first full season in the sport, Edwards has already made one guest appearance for Cradley.

He scored six paid seven in the final home meeting of 2017 against Eastbourne, the club he will ride for in this year's National League, and won his first ever race at Monmore Green. Edwards also competed in last year's F.A.S.T Golden Hammer, scoring an impressive ten points.

Kemp, meanwhile is being tipped for big things. He will ride for Mildenhall in the National League and Heathens co-promoter Gary Patchett thanked them for allowing the deal to be done.

"We have a lot of options for the team but we wanted to have one of the talented youngsters at reserve and Drew fits the bill," Patchett said.

Of Edwards, Patchett said: "He's a very talented young rider and one that, had we been able to take a place in the League this season, we'd like to think would've been interested in a team place with the Heathens."



Drew Kemp



Edwards

Shaw fire back to beat battling Yeltz

Shaw Lane 3 Halesowen 2

HALESOWEN led 2-1 at the break but were foiled by two goals in five minutes late on in this Evo-Stik Premier clash.

Third-placed Lane took the lead on just five minutes when Spencer Harris was handed a free header. But Enoch Ekong equalised on 38 minutes and four minutes later Jordan Goddard gave Yeltz the lead.

It could have been three on 53 minutes when Kevin Monterio slid the ball wide. It proved pivotal as Nicky Walker equalised on 73 minutes. And on 77 minutes a corner was not held by Daniel Platt and ended up in the net.

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